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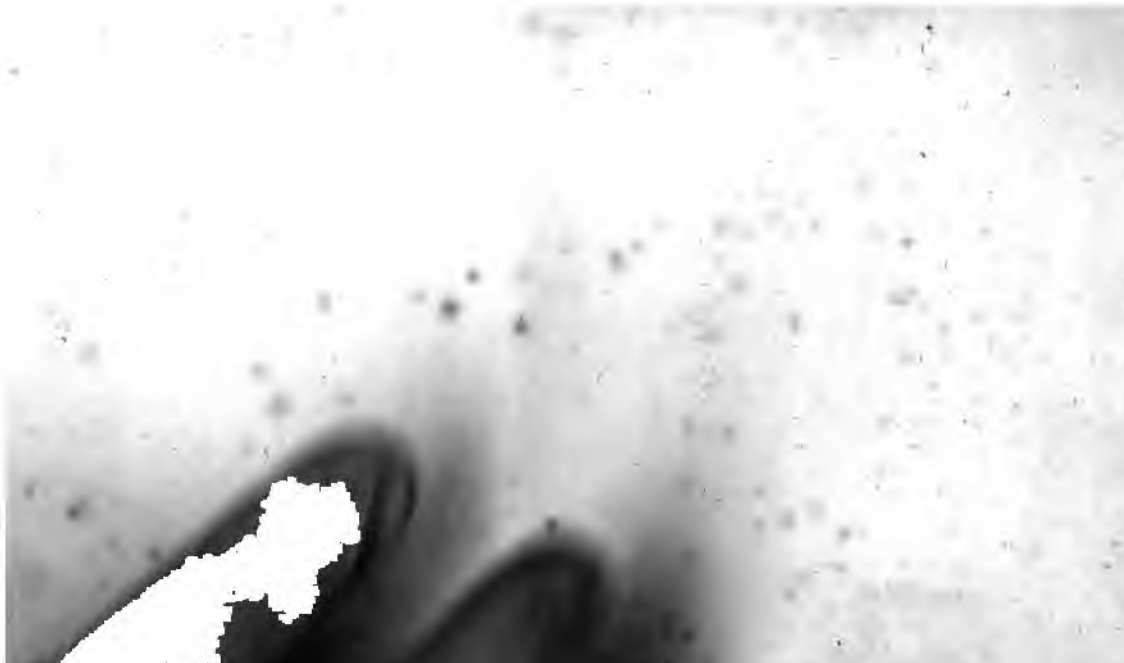

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THE

NATCHEZ;

AN INDIAN TALE.

BY THE

VISCOUNT DE CHATEAUBRIAND.

AUTHOR OF

ATALA, THE BEAUTIES OF CHRISTIANITY,

TRAVELS IN THE HOLY LAND, &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1827.

19.

J. B. NICHOLS, 25, PARLIAMENT-STREET.

THE NATCHEZ.

SOME days after this deplorable confession, Réne was summoned before the council of the Natchez. Chactas had set out for Georgia, and Father Souel on his return to his mission.

René found several Sachems, almost all of them kinsmen to Akansie, assembled in the hut of the young Sun. Ondouré was at their head; his face beamed with the joy of guilt. The old men, smoking their calumets in profound silence, received the husband of Celuta with a threatening look.

"Take these strings of beads," said Ondouré to him, with a sarcastic air; "go and negociate

with the Illinois? thou wast the cause of the war, handsome prisoner; be now the instrument of peace."

What cared the brother of Amelia for these insults? What were these paltry troubles compared with the anguish which wrung his heart? He took the strings of beads and withdrew, declaring that he would obey the commands of the Sachems.

It was not, in the disposition in which René then was, without painful pleasure that he found himself obliged to leave Celuta: he supposed her to be on the point of returning to Natchez. A solitary journey through the deserts was at this moment suited to his tone of mind; it would at least enable him to indulge his sorrows unseen by men. He called not upon his brother, who was just then engaged by his marriage with Mila; it was but fair that Outougamiz, for such courage and sacrifices, should enjoy a gleam of happiness.

The precautions of Ondouré rendered it expedient to remove the white warrior; he was apprehensive lest René, if he remained at Natchez, might discover something of the plots which he was hatching. The guardian of the young Sun was also desirous that Celuta, on her return to New Orleans, should be alone, that she might be exposed defenceless to the persecutions of a detestable passion. This chief had calculated the time which the journey of Amelia's brother would require: according to this calculation of jealousy and revenge, René could not be back at Natchez till a few days before the catastrophe, early enough to be involved in, too late to prevent it.

Enraged at the escape of his prey from his first toils, Ondouré had broached fresh calumnies against the son of Chactas. In a council assembled at night on the ruins of Adario's hut, the guardian of the Sun had described René as the cause of all the cala-

mities of the nation. Going back to the day of the stranger's arrival at Natchez, he reminded his auditors of the sinister omens which marked this arrival, the disappearance of the sacred serpent, the murder of the female beavers, the war with the Illinois, occasioned by that outrage, and the death of the old Sun, a consequence of that war: thus did Ondouré charge innocence with his own iniquities.

Entering into the private life of his rival, the chief spoke of the alleged infidelity of René toward Celuta, the wicked rite of baptism, resorted to for the purpose of destroying an infant which had become hateful to a guilty father: he mentioned the baleful Manitou given to Outougamiz to derange the reason of the simple savage. Ondouré represented the connexion of Amelia's brother and Captain Artaguette as the primary cause of all the treacheries and all the outrages of the French.

"As for the persecutions," added he, "which this man seems to experience from his countrymen, they are evidently but a blind used by the conspirators. René, you observe, invariably escapes these apparent persecutions; nor was he taken at Natchez with Adario. Upon the pretext of releasing that Sachem, he repaired to New Orleans, to report what was passing at Fort Rosalie. They made believe to try the husband of Celuta; but what proves this to have been but an empty show, displayed to induce us to place more confidence in a traitor is, that sentence was not executed on this traitor, and that, to the great astonishment of the French themselves, he returned safe and sound to Natchez. You will not have a moment's doubt of the pernicious intrigues of this wretch, if you observe his fondness for wandering alone in the woods: he is afraid lest his conscience should betray itself in his face,

turn of the latter from New Orleans. When the Indians met the white man in the woods, they turned out of his way as from a sacrilegious person. René, who saw nothing, who heard nothing, and who concerned himself about nothing, set out for the country of the Illinois, ignorant that the sentence of death, with which he had been threatened by civilized judges at New Orleans, had been pronounced upon him by savage judges at Natchez. A late flower is sometimes seen at the conclusion of autumn; it smiles alone in the field, and expands among the dry leaves that have fallen from the tops of trees: thus did the loves of Mila and Outougamiz shed a last charm upon the days of desolation. The brother of Celuta, before he asked the young girl in marriage, complied with the Indian custom, called the Trial of the Torch: when a virgin extinguishes a torch that is presented to her, this signifies that she accepts the suitor by whom it is brought.

Outougamiz went forth at midnight, holding in his hand a fragrant torch: the breezes agitated the golden beams of the luminary of love, as we are told the Zephyrs sported at Paphos in the perfumed hair of the Mother of the Graces. The young man descried the hut of his mistress: fears and hopes heaved his bosom. He approached, lifted up the bark suspended for a door to Mila's dwelling, and found himself in that part of the hut where the maiden was sleeping alone.

The damsel lay on a bed of moss. A veil of mulberry bark wrapped her like a scarf: her bare arms were crossed over her head, and beside it were some flowers which had dropped from her hands.

With his body bent forward and one foot thrown back, Outougamiz contemplated the charming scene by the light of his torch. Agitated by the illusions of a dream, Mila muttered a few words: a smile sate upon her lips. Outougamiz conceived that he could

distinguish his name in half articulate words; he leant over the edge of the couch, took a branch of jasmine of Florida, which had dropped from Mila's hand, and awoke the daughter of the forests by lightly drawing the scented flower over the virgin's mouth.

Mila awoke, fixed her affrighted eyes on her lover, smiled, resumed her look of terror, and again smiled. "It is I," cried Outougamiz, "I, the brother of Celuta, the warrior who wishes to be thy husband." Mila hesitated, protruded her lips to blow out the torch of Hymen, hastily drew back her head, again advanced her mouth towards the torch ..... and darkness pervaded the hut.

A few moment's silence ensued. Outougamiz then said to Mila: "I love thee as the light of the sun; I wish to be thy brother."

And I thy sister," responded Mila.

"Thou wilt be my wife," resumed the friend of René; a little warrior will smile upon thee; thou wilt kiss his eyes and sing to

him the exploits of his forefathers; thou wilt teach him to pronounce the name of Outougamiz."

"Thou makest me weep," answered Mila; "as for me, I will accompany thee in the forests; I will carry thine arrows, and I will kindle a fire for thee at night."

The moon was then sinking in the west; one of her rays entering at the door, fell on Mila's face and bosom. The queen of night appeared amid a retinue of stars, while clouds were outspread around her like the curtains of her bed. On the forests reposed a sort of doubtful darkness, like that of a soul which opens for the first time to the tender passions of life. The happy couple fell into an involuntary abstraction of mind; nothing was to be heard but the trembling respiration of the young maiden. Presently Mila thus spake:

"We must part: the bird of dawn begins his first strains; return to thy dwelling before

thou art perceived. If the warriors see thee they will say, 'Outougamiz is weak; the Illinois will take him in battle, for he haunts the hut of Indian girls.'"

"I will be the black liane," replied Outougamiz, "which turns from all the other trees in the forest, and seeks the sassafras, which alone it will entwine."

Mila covered her head with a mantle and said, "Warrior, I can no longer see thee."

Outougamiz buried the nuptial torch at the door of the hut, and returned into the woods.

The marriage was solemnized with the ceremonies usual among the Savages. The young couple disliked this parade, and said to each other: "We marry not to be happy, since our friends are not so." Left alone in their new hut, they there tasted joys worthy of their innocence. They wept too as they had intended. The tears which flowed from their eyes trickled to their lips, and Mila said, when receiving the kisses of Outouga-

miz, "Thy lips meet mine through the misfortunes of René."

Alas! the faithful Indian was destined soon to shed other tears! The guardian of the Sun, not content with having ruined the brother of Amelia in the estimation of the people, and procured his condemnation by the council of elders, resolved to strike him in the very heart of his friend.

It was requisite for the success of Ondouré's plots, that Outougamiz should attend the great meeting of the Savages, at which the general plan was to be developed. If Outougamiz were absent from this assembly, he would not be bound by the oath which was then to be taken, and he might in this case oppose the conspiracy at the moment of its execution. If Outougamiz did not believe that René was guilty of treachery to the Natchez, nothing would prevent the brother of Celuta, as soon as he knew the secret, from communicating it to the brother of Amelia.

It was therefore absolutely necessary!—combination worthy of hell!—that Outougamiz should be chained by an oath, and that, persuaded at the same time of the guilt of René, he should be reduced to the alternative of undoing his friend to save his country, or undoing his country to save his friend.

The day after the nuptials of the heroic friend of René, the very day when Mila, radiant with happiness, was conversing with Outougamiz on a mat sprinkled with flowers, Ondouré entered the hut.

"Evil Spirit!" exclaimed Mila, "what wouldst thou here? comest thou to bring us calamity?"

Ondouré, affecting an ironical smile, seated himself on the ground, and said:

"Outougamiz, I come to offer thee my good wishes, thou deservest to be happy."

"Happy!" rejoined Outougamiz, "and what man is happier than I am? Where canst

thou find any thing comparable to my wife and my friend?"

"I will not destroy thy illusions," replied Ondouré, with a sorrowful look; "yet, if thou didst but know what the whole nation knows! what a wicked Manitou has bound thee to that white skin!"

"Guardian of the Sun!" exclaimed Outougamiz, colouring, "I respect thee; but beware of calumniating my friend! Better were it for thee that thou hadst never been born."

"Admirable young man!" responded Ondouré; "why hast thou not found a friendship worthy of thine own!"

"Chief!" cried Outougamiz, in a tone of impatience, "thou tormentest me as the wind blows about the flame of the fire; what wouldst thou? what meanest thou? what seekest thou?"

"O my country! my country!" ejaculated Ondouré with a sigh.

At that word country, the brow of Outou-

gamiz became overcast: he rose hastily from his mat, and approached Ondouré, who had likewise risen. The fear of some terrible secret had darted across the soul of the brother of Celuta.

"What then is amiss with the country?" said the noble savage. "Are we required to take up arms? let us march: where is the enemy?"

"The enemy!" answered Ondouré: "the enemy is in our bowels. We are sold, delivered up, like slaves: a traitor . . . ."

"Name him!" cried Outougamiz, with a voice in which a thousand contrary sentiments mingled their tones: "name him, but beware what thou sayest."

Ondouré surveyed Outougamiz, whose hands trembled with indignation. Grasping the arm of the young man to prevent the first blow, he exclaimed, "René!"

"Thou liest!" replied Outougamiz, striving to disengage his arm; "I will tear out

thy infernal tongue; I will make a memorable example of thee."

Mila ran to part the two warriors. "Let the wretch live," said she to Outougamiz, merely drive him out of thy hut."

At these words of Mila's the rage of Outougamiz subsided.

"Guardian of the Sun!" said he, "I now perceive that thou wouldst but divert thyself with my simplicity; but play not that game again; it is too painful to me."

"I leave thee," said Ondouré; "thou wilt soon do me more justice: consult the priest of the Sun and thine uncle, Adario." Ondouré quitted the hut.

Outougamiz strove to appear calm, but he no longer was so: he lay down, and he knew not how it was that the rushes of his mat were more prickly than the thorns of the acacia. He rose, walked to and fro, and again sat down. Mila spoke to him, and he heard her not. "Why," muttered he in a

low tone, "why has that chief spoken thus? I was so happy!"

"Think nothing of it," said Mila, "the words of the wicked are like sand which a burning wind blows into the face: it blinds the traveller and forces tears from his eyes."

"Thou art right, Mila," answered Outougamiz, I am quite calm now."

Unfortunate man! the fatal blow is sped! never more shalt thou find repose! Thy slumbers, heretofore light as thine innocence, shall now be haunted by horrid dreams. Such is the happiness of mortals—a word is sufficient to destroy it. Delightful confidence of the soul! close and sacred union, farewell for ever! Holy friendship! thy delights are past, thy torments begin! will they ever be at an end?

"Mila," said Outougamiz, "I am not well, I will go and consult the juggler."

"The juggler!" rejoined Mila, "go not near that man. René loves thee, thou lovest

him; he ought to suffice thee as thou sufficest me. If the dove listens to the voice of the raven, he will tell her things which will disturb her, because he does not speak her language."

"It is not to talk of René that I wish to see the juggler," said Outougamiz; "I am ill; he will cure me."

Mila laid her hand on the heart of Outougamiz, and looking at her husband with a half smile, said, "Ill! yes, very ill, for an untruth has just escaped thy lips."

Outougamiz persisted in his intention of consulting the priest, whom Ondouré had expressly named in his mysterious revelations. "Go then," said Mila, "poor bee of the savannah: but beware of alighting on the poisonous flower of the acota."

It is not given to man to be perfect: with the most heroic qualities Outougamiz united one weakness; from the fear of God, that wholesome fear, without which there is no

virtue, Outougamiz had descended to the blindest credulity. The simplicity of his character rendered him an easy dupe; with the brother of Celuta a priest was an oracle; and if that minister of the Great Spirit spoke in the name of his country—an object so dear to savages—how could Outougamiz escape this two-fold power of earth and heaven?

The friend of René reached the door of the juggler's hut: at that very moment Ondouré was leaving the habitation of the priest, and with a look which spoke every thing, he left a free passage for Outougamiz. The juggler, as soon as he perceived the new visitor, began to trace magic circles. Outougamiz addressed him in a supplicating voice.

"Who speaks?" exclaimed the priest, with a wild look. "What audacious mortal disturbs the interpreter of Spirits? Begone profane one! my country now requires all my prayers. O my country, what a monster dost thou cherish in thy bosom! The infa-

mous stranger meditated thy ruin; by him the female beavers were murdered; he betrayed Celuta; he poured the deadly water of sorcery on the head of his infant. How he deceived the young and innocent Outougamiz! Wo unto thee, husband of Mila! if thou dost not henceforward shun that traitor, and if thou refusest to believe his crimes! Phantoms shall haunt thy steps, and the bones of thy ancestors shall be agitated in their graves.

The juggler bounded forth from his hut, and rushed into the forest, where he was heard howling.

The brother of Celuta was thunderstruck; he was bathed with a cold perspiration, which seemed to issue from his heart, and to force its way through all his limbs. He only who has performed such prodigies of valour as Outougamiz can portray his anguish. René a traitor? Who dare thus traduce him? Where is the calumniator, that Outougamiz may

tear him in pieces? But is it not the priest of the Sun! he who communes with Spirits! he who speaks in the name of the country! Wretched man! dost thou not then believe when Heaven itself commands thee to believe! . . . .No! that friend is not guilty! Monsters alone have raised their voices against him. The brother of Celuta will avenge René in the face of the nation. Eloquence will alight upon the lips of Outougamiz: he will speak better than Chactas; he will challenge the accusers to the combat . . . . I go: I fly whither the golden Manitou summons me. . . . Maniac, hearest thou not the cries of phantoms? seest thou not the bones of thy forefathers rising from the grave to attest the crimes of thy friend?

Such is a faint delineation of the struggle that was passing in the soul of the brother of Celuta. He left the hut of the priest: pale and dejected, he wearily pursued his way; he fancied that he heard sounds in the air,

and the grass murmuring under his feet. Whither was he going? he know not. A fatal impulse led him involuntarily to Adario. Adario was his uncle; Adario supplied the place of father to him; in the absence of Chactas, Adario was the first Sachem of the nation; lastly, Adario was the most afflicted of men. Adversity is also a religion: it ought to be consulted; it gives oracles: the voice of misfortune is the voice of truth. Thus argued Outougamiz, as he proceeded in quest of the stern old man.

The Sachem had seen his son slain by his side, and his hut consumed by fire; the Sachem had strangled his grand-child with his own hand; the wife of the Sachem had fallen in the commotion which followed the horrid sacrifice; of all his family Adario had none left but the daughter whose infant he had destroyed. Shut up with this daughter in the dungeons of Fort Rosalie, he had been doomed to end his days on a gibbet. "Raise

me high enough," said he to the hangman who was conducting him to execution, "that I may discern, when expiring, the trees of my country." The reader knows why, in what manner, at what price, and with what view, Ondouré redeemed the life of Adario.

The return of the friend of Chactas to Natchez was a grand sight. The Sachem looked like a skeleton escaped from the graves: a few grey hairs, sullied with dust, descended from either side of his bald head: his garments hung in tatters. With downcast eyes he walked silently along; his daughter followed in like silence, as the victim follows him by whom it is about to be sacrificed: fastened to her back she bore an empty cradle and the swaddling-clothes, henceforth useless, of a new-born infant.

Adario would not rebuild his hut: he fixed his abode amid the forests. His daughter attended him at a distance, not daring to speak to him, watching over him, seating herself

when he sat down, and proceeding when he pursued his way. The Sachem sometimes contemplated the French tilling the soil of his country: the exterminating angel could not cast more appalling looks on a world from which the living God had withdrawn his hand.

After the deliverance of Adario, Ondouré imparted to him his plan for a signal revenge. He held out to him, as its aim, the independence of the Natchez, and the expulsion of the race of the Whites from all the shores of America: but he concealed from him the secret springs, the base motives, and the mysterious villanies, which set this conspiracy in motion. Adario had never borrowed the veil of guile to cover virtue for a single moment.

The Sachem attended the secret council convened at night by Ondouré; he approved so much of the plans of the guardian of the Sun as he communicated, namely, the convocation of the Indian nations in a general as-

sembly, in order to their taking one common measure against the strangers; he sanctioned the condemnation of René, of René whom he deemed guilty of impiety and treason. These resolutions being adopted, the elders endeavoured to prevail on Adario to engage in his usual occupations.

"While I breathe," said the Sachem, "I will have no other shelter than the vault of heaven. As a defender of the country I am innocent; as a father I am criminal. I consent to live a few days longer for my country: but Adario has reserved the right of punishing himself, when the Natchez have ceased to need his arm."

It was of this inflexible heart, the heart least susceptible of the feelings of nature, the man most soured by grief, that René went to solicit counsel, after his interview with the priest.

Outougamiz found the Sachem half-naked, sitting on the point of a rock on the margin

of a torrent: he repeated to him the inspirations of the juggler. Adario gave his nephew an account of the alleged crimes of René. "Thou slayest me like thy son!" exclaimed the brother of Celuta, in a tone which moved the Sachem himself.

Never was wretchedness stamped so suddenly, and expressed in a more energetic manner, on the brow of man, than on that of Outougamiz: the purer the marble, the deeper the inscription. The unfortunate man quitted Adario: he grasped the gold chain, looked passionately at it, was about to throw it into the torrent, then pressed it to his bosom, and again hung it round his neck. Outougamiz was still ignorant of the fate reserved for René; Adario had enlarged upon the guilt of the white man, but not wishing absolutely to overwhelm his nephew, he had abstained from acquainting him with the sentence of the Sachems—a sentence pronounced moreover under the seal of secrecy. The

thoughts of Mila came like a refreshing breeze to cool the burning anguish of Outougamiz: the young husband recollected that his new wife, whose brow was still wreathed with the crown of the first morning, was already left a widow beneath his roof; and he resolved to seek consolation from her society.

Mila flew to him; she perceived that his step faltered, and supported him, saying: "It is the liane which now sustains the tulip-tree. Well! I foretold how it would be! Sit down and rest thy head on my bosom. What have the wretches told thee?"

"They have repeated what Ondouré said to me," answered Outougamiz; "Adario too talks just like the juggler."

"If it were Kitchi-Manitou himself," exclaimed Mila, "I would maintain that it is a lie. What, I!—I believe the calumnies circulated against my friend! Would he who gave thee the gold Manitou believe the ill that might be spoken of thee?"

This question brought tears into the eyes of Outougamiz. "Ah!" cried Mila, weeping in her turn; "the white warrior is a good man! they will kill him, I am certain of that."

"Kill him!" rejoined Outougamiz, "who told thee so?"

"I guess so," answered his wife; "if thou dost not save René a third time, they will put him into the Grove of Death."

"They shall not," cried Outougamiz, "or I will sleep there along with him. Why am I not already at the place of my rest! All is so tempestuous on the surface of the earth,—all so quiet an arrow's length below! But, Mila, our country!"

"Country!" rejoined Mila; "what is country to me, if it is unjust? I love a single hair of Outougamiz innocent better than all the gray heads of perverted Sachems. What need have I of a hut at Natchez? I can build one on a spot where nobody dwells, and

take my husband and his friend with me, in despite of you all, ye wretches! That is what I would have told the juggler. He would have turned round, traced circles, and leaped three times like an elk. I should have laughed to his face, turned, frisked, and leaped as well, aye, better than he. Here is a Spirit (laying her hand on her heart) which is not influenced by black enchantments."

"How thou cheerest me! how well thou speakest!" exclaimed the generous Savage: "And wouldst thou then accompany me into the wilderness!"

Mila looked stedfastly at him, and said: "'Tis as if the river should say to the flower which has been washed from the bank, and is carried away by the current; 'Flower, wilt thou go with my stream?' and the flower should answer, 'No, I will not'—the waters would nevertheless bear it gently along."

The amiable Indian had prepared the evening repast: after wetting her lips at the

cup, she returned to that unsung nuptial couch, which derived all its pomp from the simplicity and grace of the young couple. The soft arms of Mila clasped Outougamiz, and soothed his sorrows, as the light silken hands which at the same time press and ease the wound of a warrior.

Ye fugitive hours, stolen by love from grief, how speedily did ye pass! Already had the council of the Sachems received the first strings of beads from their secret messengers: every night Ondouré assembled some of the chiefs in caverns. The governor of Louisiana, not to be deceived so easily as the commandant of Fort Rosalie, did not fall asleep amidst dangers: he regretted having liberated the brother of Amelia, and he would have given orders for the apprehension of Celuta, had he not been diverted from his purpose by the tears of Adelaide.

When Celuta was apprized of the departure of René, all the endeavours of her friends

to detain her at New Orleans were ineffectual. In vain did Adelaide, Harlay, General Artaguette—the captain and the grenadier had returned to Natchez—represent to her that her strength was inadequate to the fatigues of so long a journey: she conjured her sister and her brothers of the white skin, as she called them, to allow her to set out on her return to her own country; and they were obliged to yield to her ardent entreaties, which were interpreted for them by the aged mother of Jacques. Celuta embraced with emotion that poor and venerable matron, her hostess on the eventful night. "My brother and my sister," said she to Harlay and Adelaide, remember Celuta when you are in the land of the Whites. I hope some time to meet you again in the region of souls, if wretched Indians like me are there permitted to enter the beautiful forest in which you will dwell."

The governor's daughter conducted her friend to the canoes of a large party of Paw-

nees, who were preparing to ascend the river: there they repeated their affectionate adieus. Celuta embarked in the Pawnee flotilla. "Farewell," said she to Adelaide, who sat weeping on the bank, "may the good Spirits repay your kindness! I shall not see you again upon earth, where you will stay long after me; but I will strive to do as little evil as possible during my rapid passage, in order to render myself worthy of your remembrance." The canoes departed.

When Celuta quitted the town of the French, her brow was overspread with the paleness of grief, and of an illness from which she had scarcely recovered. Her daughter, whose face already exhibited somewhat of the beauty and the melancholy of Amelia; her daughter, on whose birth-day the sun had not yet shone twice, seemed to be at the point of death. Celuta carried her at her back, suspended in white ermine-skins; so a swan, to remove her young, places them between her

flexible neck and her wings, which are slightly raised; the charming passengers sport half-buried in the down of their mother.

The whole soul of Celuta was divided between her husband and her child. What trials were already past! what calamities might still be expected! The canoes had not proceeded more than a few hours, when the Pawnees, from one of those caprices so frequent among Savages, brought-to on the eastern bank of the river. Celuta went on shore with her conductors; but the latter, from another whim, presently dispersed, some beginning to hunt, and others returning silently on board. Celuta had fallen asleep in a sequestered spot behind a rock, which intercepted the view of the river: night had come on. When the wife of René awoke, she found herself left alone.

If Indian thoughtlessness had brought her into this situation, Indian courage supported her under it: she was accustomed to solitude.

The darkness prevented the Pawnees from seeing the sister of Outougamiz, and the wind from hearing her cries: she awaited day-light with resignation.

On the appearance of the dawn, Celuta left her retreat under the rock; looking at the different points of the heavens, she said to herself: "My husband is that way," and she directed her steps towards the north. She had not so much as a thought of returning to New Orleans: she felt more secure in the forests than among men. She reckoned upon wild fruit for her subsistence, and her breast would supply the wants of her child.

All day she journeyed on, gathering here and there a few berries among the bushes.

At the hour when the blue owl begins to flit about in the American forests, Celuta reached the summit of a hill; she resolved to pass the night at the foot of a tamarind-tree, in the hollow trunk of which the Indians sometimes kindled the fire of the traveller.

In the south appeared the town of the Whites, on the west the Meschacebé, and to the north a lofty bank on which is erected a cross.

Taking in her arms the daughter of the man of the passions, Celuta gave her the breast, which the weakly infant could scarcely press with her lips; so a gardener waters a drooping plant, but it continues to decline, for the earth has not received it favourably at its birth. In her maternal apprehension, Celuta durst not look at her tender nursling, lest she should perceive the progress of the disorder: her eyes, filled with tears, gazed vacantly on the surrounding objects. Such, unhappy Hagar, was thy anguish in the wilderness of Beersheba, when, turning thy face from Ishmael, thou exclaimedst: "Let me not see the death of the child!" The night was gloomy and cold.

At day-break, after making a repast of may-apples and roots of canneberge, the traveller, laden with her treasure, resumed her route.

The sameness of the wilderness was not interrupted save by the still more monotonous aspect of the cross. This was that cross to which René had made a pilgrimage in descending to New Orleans: God alone knew what the fervent pilgrim had secretly solicited. A stone still stained with the blood of the murdered man lay near the expiatory tree: a stream flowed at some distance.

The sister of Outougamiz seated herself on the stone: she picked up involuntarily the oak branch which René had laid as a votive offering at the foot of the cross: the eyes of the Indian were fixed on the dry branch, which she gently waved, as if she had found some resemblance between its destiny and her own. Celuta was absorbed in reverie, while the wind whistled in the arms of the cross, and in the tops of some thistles which grew out of the rocks. Several times she imagined that she heard voices, as if the Angels of the Cross

and of Death had been conversing unseen on that spot.

The wife of René hastened to leave a monument of woe, which she supposed to be guarded by the dreaded Spirits of the Europeans. At the bottom of this valley rose small hills covered with tulip-trees, liquidambars, cypresses, and magnolias, and about which wound the stream that bore its tribute to the Meschacebé. From the bosom of the heated earth issued the perfume of the angelica and other fragrant herbs.

Pleased, nay almost cheered by the charms of this wilderness, Celuta sat down on the moss and prepared the maternal banquet. She laid Amelia on her lap and unrolled one after another the ermine-skins in which she was wrapped. The tears which fell from the eyes of the mother seemed to revive the suffering daughter, as if that infant were doomed to hold life of sorrow alone.

When Celuta had lavished her caresses and

attentions on her child, she sought some food for herself.

The spot where she was had once been inhabited by an Indian tribe. Over a field formerly cultivated were scattered some plants of maize, and the corns of these wild ears were full of an unctuous cream: these furnished a repast for Celuta.

About sun-set, the sister of Outougamiz retired to the entrance of a cavern lined with jasmine of Florida, and surrounded by bushes of azalea. Numbers of nonpareils, cardinal-birds, mocking-birds, parrots, and colibris, which glistened like precious stones in the fire of the west, repaired for shelter to the same grotto.

Night came on clothed with that beauty which it has no where but in the American wilds. The starry heaven was besprinkled with white clouds resembling light flakes of froth, or sheep wandering in an azure plain. All the beasts of the creation, the does, the

caribous, the bisons, the roebucks, the elks, sallied from their retreats to graze in the savannahs. In the distance were heard the extraordinary tones of frogs; some of them, imitating the lowing of the labouring ox, others, the ringing of a country bell, remind you of the rustic scenes of civilized Europe amid the wild pictures presented by savage America.

The breezes embalmed by the magnolias, the birds hidden by the foliage, murmured harmonious plaints which Celuta took for the voices of unborn infants; she fancied that she beheld the tiny Spirits of the shades and those which preside over the silence of the woods, descending from the firmament on the moonbeams, and light phantoms flitting among the trees and along the streams. Then addressing her child as it lay upon her lap, she said: "Were I to be so unfortunate as to lose thee now, what would become of me? Ah! if thy father still loved me, I would soon find

thee again! I would bare my breast; I would descry thy spirit fluttering with the breezes of dawn on the wet stems of flowers, and my lips should suck thee up in the dew. But thy father is estranged from me, and the souls of infants never return into the bosom of those mothers who are not beloved."

As she uttered these words the Indian shed religious tears, as a delicious pine-apple, which has lost its crown, and the heart of which has been exposed to the rain, dissolves and runs off in the form of water.

Pelicans, flying at a great height in the air, and the rose-coloured plumage of which reflected the first rays of morn, apprized Celuta that it was time to resume her journey. She first stripped her child to bathe it in a stream, at which black squirrels, clinging to the extremity of a floating liane, were stretching out their necks to drink. The white and delicate Amelia, laid on the grass, resembled a narcissus beaten down by the storm, or a bird

that has fallen from its nest before it is fledged. Celuta, after washing her infant, covered her with cypress moss finer than silk; she did not forget to adorn her with beads of different colours and flowers of various odours; lastly, she wrapped her in ermine skins, and again suspended her to her back with a cord of twisted honeysuckles: thus doth the pilgrim, journeying barefoot in the mountains of Jerusalem, carry the sacred presents which he is to offer to the holy tomb.

The daughter of Tabamica now crossed by a bridge of liane the river which here obstructed the way. She had proceeded scarely an hour, when she found herself on a spot beset with pools of water full of crocodiles. While she was considering what to do, she heard a breathing behind her: turning her head, she saw the glazed blood-shot eyes of an enormous reptile glaring upon her. She fled, but tripping with her foot against another monster, she fell upon its sonorous

scales. The dragon bellowed; Celuta rose, and missed the light burden from her back. She shrieked; on the point of being herself devoured, she thought of nothing but what she had lost. All at once the two monsters, whose burning breath she already felt at her feet, turned aside, and hastened off to other prey. How piercing are the eyes of a mother! they discovered among the high grass the object which attracted the terrific animals. Celuta sprang forward, snatched up her child, and bore her, with a swiftness not surpassed by the flight of the swallow, to the summit of a promontory, whence the eye follows in the distance the windings of the Meschacebé.

Victory of a woman! who shall describe thine exultation and thy joy! The orb of night, which has just dispersed in the heavens the clouds of a tempest, appears less beautiful than did the pale Celuta triumphing in the wilderness. Amelia had not known her danger; she had not even awoke on her bed of moss;

her dress retained its freshness and symmetry. Laden with the cradle in which innocence slept beneath flowers, Celuta accomplished her flight as the elegant Canephora finished her race, without deranging the garlands and crowns in her basket. But fear, which could not affect the infant, had wrought with the more power on the mother; the source of her child's nourishment was dried up; thus when the earth is convulsed by the heavings of Etna, a stream disappears in the plains of Sicily, and the thirsty lamb in vain seeks the refreshing beverage at the exhausted spring.

Celuta was at a loss to conceive how she could be in want of nourishment for her child; how her breast could refuse its usual supply, while her heart overflowed with tenderness. She accused her weakness; she even reproached herself with her sufferings, with the excess of her maternal alarm. She sought a cause for this chastisement of the Great Spirit. She asked herself if she had

ceased to be faithful to her husband; if she had been fond enough of her daughter; if she had wronged any of her friends; if she had wished ill to her enemies; if her hut, her family, her tribe, her country, the Manitous, the Spirits had not some reason or other to complain of her. With her eyes raised towards the abode of the Father who feeds all mankind, she showed to Heaven her drained breast, soliciting its former fecundity, and complaining of unmerited rigour.

All at once Amelia, lying on the grass, began to cry; she asked for the accustomed repast. Her supplicating hands were turned towards her mother. Despair seized the sister of Outougamiz: she took up her child and clasped it sobbing to her bosom; why could she not nourish it with her tears! that source at least was inexhaustible.

A baleful inspiration caused the heart of the forlorn woman to throb vehemently; Celuta imagined that the maternal fluid was

nothing but the blood of her husband; and that it was René who withdrew from her that source of life; but could she not open a vein and substitute her own blood for that which was withheld from the lips of her child?

She would probably have taken some extreme resolution, had she not at that moment perceived smoke rising on either side of the Meschacebé, and indicating the habitations of men. This sight restored strength to Celuta; besides, the Indian had not absolutely determined to die, for her husband lived and lived unfortunate. She descended from the promontory, bearing the dear and fatal pledge of her love; but the river was farther distant than it appeared to be, and by the time she reached its bank, night had thrown her veil over the face of heaven.

The smoke of the huts was lost in the darkness. The moon, as she rose, shed over the waves of the Meschacebé less light than me-

lancholy and silence. Celuta looked round for some boat. Her eyes followed the fugitive billows, which in rapid succession heaved their bright tops toward the orb of night. She descried a floating object.

She presently saw a young negro, almost naked, come out of the river a few paces from her; a cloth was fastened round his loins, after the fashion of his country, and his head was adorned with a crown of red feathers. He sang in a low tone something sweet in his own tongue; he extended his arms towards the water and seemed to apostrophize some invisible object in impassioned words. Celuta recognized Imley, who likewise knew her; he approached her, exclaiming: "Celuta! O terrible Niang. Celuta here!"

"I come from the town of weeping," answered Celuta: "see here, the doe of the Natchez must soon lose her fawn, for the milk of her breast is dried up."

"The doe of the Natchez shall not lose her fawn," rejoined Imley; we will find a mother to suckle it. Celuta is beautiful as a beneficent Fetish."

"What! Imley here!" exclaimed Celuta.

"My old master," replied Imley, "after beating me because I was fond of liberty, sold me to the inhabitant of a neighbouring hut. Come with me; I will give thee maize and a black woman of my forests to suckle the red infant of thine; the Whites shall know nothing of the matter."

Celuta followed her guide.

"And thou art still unhappy, poor Celuta!" said the African, as he walked forward. I too am miserable enough in the day-time, but at night. . . ." Imley put his finger to his lips in token of secrecy.

"And at night thou art less wretched," said Celuta; "for my part, I am always weeping."

"Celuta!" replied Imley, "didst thou but know! She is beautiful as the palm-tree of the desert. When she commands the smile to visit her lips, her teeth resemble the pearls of dew in the red leaves of the betel."

The descendant of Ham suddenly stopped Celuta, and pointed to the river. "Seest thou the silvery tops of those copalms, down yonder over the water? Seest thou close by them the shades of yon purple beeches, almost as beautiful as those on the brow of my mistress? Seest thou the columns of those papayas between which appears the face of the moon, like the head of my Izephar between her two arms raised to embrace me? Well! those are the trees of an island. Isle of love! isle of Izephar! the waves shall not cease to bathe thy shores, the birds to charm thy woods, and thy breezes to waft delight. 'Tis there, Celuta. She dwells on the opposite shore of the Meschacebé; my hut is on this bank; every night she swims across the

arm of the river to the island; but her Imley is always there first. I receive Izephar as she comes out of the water; I hide her in my bosom; I serve her for apparel and shelter; our kisses are slower than those of the breezes which play about the flower of the aloe at the close of the day: two beauteous black snakes entwine each other less closely; we go to sleep on the margin of the river, vying in sluggishness with its waves.

"Often too do we talk of our country; we sing of Niang, Zanhar, and the loves of the lions. Every night I put on the dress in which thou now seest me, and which I wore when I was free, beneath the bananas of Madinga. I project my hand in the air; it seems as if I am still hurling the javelin at the tiger, or thrusting my arm, defended by bark, down the throat of the panther. These recollections fill my eyes with tears more delicous than those of benjoin, or the smoke of the pipe filled with incense. I can then

imagine that I am drinking the milk of the cocoa-nut under the fig-tree arcade; I fancy myself sauntering with my gazelle through forests of clove, mahogany, and sandal trees. How lovely art thou, O my Izephar! thou impartest loveliness to all that touches thy charms. I could eat the leaves of thy bed, for thy couch is divine, O daughter of night! divine as the nest of the African swallows, as that nest which is placed on the tables of kings, and is composed of the most fragrant flowers and the most costly aromatics."

Thus spake Imley: he kissed the air on fire around him, and charged the burning ether to seek the lips of the beloved female by the impatient route of desire.

At that moment the little Amelia began to cry. Imley laid both his hands on the head of the mother, and said: "Thou art the woman of sorrows."

"I pray the Great Spirit," replied Celuta,

"that the offspring of Izephar may be happier than mine."

"I love Izephar like a pearl," rejoined the descendant of Cain, with great warmth, "but she shall never carry a slave in her bosom: the elephant has taught me wisdom."

Conversing thus, the wife of René and her guide had arrived at the huts of the negroes belonging to the plantation. The squat roofs of these huts appeared among tall sunflowers. Imley and Celuta crossed patches of yams and potatoes, which the African slave cultivates, in his short intervals of leisure, for his own and his family's subsistence. Profound quiet pervaded those places: on this foreign soil, on the couch of servitude, sleep lulled these exiles with illusions of liberty and country. "My black brethren are asleep," said Imley in a low tone to Celuta: "the fools! they are regaining strength to toil for a master. But I....."

The American and the African entered a

hut the door of which Imley gently pushed open. He stripped off his pagne, which he hid beneath some straw: "for," said he, "our masters allege that the dress of my country is a Fetish, which will bring calamity upon them." He resumed the garb of a slave, and awoke a female. This woman descended from her hammock of blue cotton, blew into the dying embers, at the same time throwing some dry cane-leaves upon them: a bright flame suddenly illumined the interior of the cottage. Celuta recognized Glazirne, the negress, who, on her part, was motionless with astonishment. The two women began to weep.

"Good mother of distant lands," said Celuta, "thy little Indian daughter is ready to die; my breast is shut up; I hope thine is still open to thy son."

"I did not expect to see thee again," replied Glazirne. "My master at Natchez sold me with Imley, because I had felt too

much pity for thee at the house of that good White, Artaguette. My master disliked pity: there is my joy in his cradle!"

Glazirne uncovered a cradle that was concealed by a mat, took up her infant, put that to one breast and Celuta's child to the other, and seated herself on the ground.

When the wife of René beheld this poor slave pressing to her bosom the two little creatures, so alien by their country, so different in race, but so much alike in wretchedness; when she heard her, while nursing them, lavish on them those simple songs, the maternal language which is the same in all countries, she poured forth her thanksgivings to heaven. She looked at the two children, comparing the weakness of her daughter with the strength of the son of Glazirne. "Black woman!" said she, with a mixture of joy, grief, and affectionate jealousy, "what a large hearty child is thy son! And yet he is no older than my daughter!"

"Red woman!" said Glazirne, rising, "I began with thy daughter; now take these yams for thyself, and drink this juice of a plant of my country, which will give thee back thy milk. But hasten thy departure: day will soon break: my new master hates Indian women; return not to the huts. Conceal thyself in the forest; Imley will conduct thee to a secret place known to us slaves. At noon I will bring thee food, and at midnight I will come and weep with thee. My heart is not made of the steel of the Whites; I did not come into the world without father or mother, though my mother sold me for a necklace."

Glazirne filled a cup of lemon-tree wood with a particular kind of liquor, and handed it to the traveller, as the Midianite offered a pitcher of water to the stranger at the Camel's Well. Celuta drank the contents of the cup, and went forth with Imley, who conducted.

her to the place which Glazirne had mentioned.

At the hour when the grasshoppers, overcome by the heat of the sun, suspend their song, Celuta heard a cry: it was that which the negroes set up in the desert to scare serpents and tigers. She descried Glazirne, who was looking about to see if any Whites were near.

The negress, gliding through the forest, deposited something at the foot of a tree, and withdrew. Celuta, advancing in her turn, took up the calebash brought for her; it contained milk for the infant, and fruit and cakes for the mother. This clandestine commerce between misfortune and affliction was carried on at the door of the rich and the happy.

Darkness once more enveloped the earth. About midnight, Celuta heard a slight rustling; she stretched forth her hand, and it soon met that of Glazirne: prosperity repels prosperity, but tears call tears; they mingle in

the hearts of the unfortunate, like those sympathetic waters which seek other through the leaves of a mysterious book, and which, blending together, render visible the characters previously traced by love.

The negress brought her child with her: she put that gage of friendship into the arms of the Indian, who felt this compliment after the fashion of nature. The two women then seated themselves beneath a turpentine-tree in a glade; they talked of their brother Artaguette, whom one had saved and the other led back wounded to the camp of the French. Glazirne pronounced magic words of her country over the daughter of Celuta, over that vessel scarcely commenced, which the flames had half-consumed on the stocks of life. The negress then opened the upper part of the tunic of slavery, in which she had hidden a dove: she set at liberty the white bird, which in affright stretched forth its neck from the sable bosom of the African woman.

This emblem of a pure soul, escaped from the prison of life and soaring to heaven, at the same time filled the mind of Glazirne with thoughts of the liberty which she had lost.

" Dost thou then believe that my daughter will die," said Celuta, " because the dove has flown away? "

" No," replied Glazirne, " the dove has conveyed to the terrible Niang the words which I softly muttered for the purpose of curing thy daughter."

" Follow the custom of thy country," rejoined the Indian, " I shall habituate myself to it much more easily than to the custom of the country of the Whites."

Glazirne unrolled the flag of a reed, in which she had enveloped a shell of the African Ocean: to this Fetish she addressed reproaches and prayers. Celuta raised this Manitou of adversity to her lips. Religion of the unfortunate, thou art every where

alike! sorrows have one common source; that source is the heart of man.

These two female savages, so full of the wonders of God, then endeavoured to lull their infants to sleep. They placed them on soft skins, side by side, in the festoons of a liane in flower, which hung from the boughs of an aged liquidambar, the son of Glazirne naked and black as ebony, the daughter of Celuta adorned with a necklace and fair as ivory: they then gently swung the suspended cradle. Celuta sang, and nature inspired her with both the tune and the words of her hymn to sleep.

"Children, happier than your mothers, may your slumbers be equally peaceful and dreamless! Are ye not on that flowery branch the two Spirits of light and darkness? Ye are white and black as those celestial twins.

"One was as the golden hair of morning; the brow of the other is covered with the

light crape of night. Charming nonpareils, repose together in this nest: may ye be more happy than your mothers!"

The tones of Celuta's voice were full of melody: they came from her soul, and her soul was like a lyre struck by angel hands. Lulled to rest by the gradual slackening of the motion of the branch, the innocent couple went to sleep: the mothers then left to the breeze the task of rocking their lovely nurslings.

The maukawees began to sing the return of dawn; the two friends thought of parting: but before they separated they collected stones to form a mark to a future age, and called it, each in her own language, the altar of afflicted women.

The African promised to return. The Indian in vain expected to see her companion again: she came no more. Once, and once only, Celuta imagined that she heard at a distance the voice of Glazirne: thus the winds

of autumn sometimes cast at night a bird of another hemisphere upon our shores; we expect to find in the morning the stranger brought by the tempest, but he has already flown in defiance of the storm, and his cry from amid the clouds brings us his last farewell.

After waiting two days, Celuta resolved to pursue her journey: she began to be anxious to see her friends again. She set out; she crossed streams on interwoven branches, light bridges constructed by the savages on their way; she traversed morasses, leaping from root to root; she sometimes concealed herself near a habitation, where Whites were taking their repast in the field cultivated by them: when they had retired, she hastened, with a flock of small birds on the watch, like herself, for the crumbs which fell from the table of man. After a long and toilsome journey, she entered her native forests, and at length arrived at Natchez.

The first Indian she saw was Ondouré. The executioner recognized his victim; he advanced towards her, and in a mild voice congratulated her on her return. "Where is René?" said Celuta; "cruel chief, why was it decreed that I should meet thee first!"

"Thy husband," replied Ondouré, with a moderation of language which his looks belied, "thy husband is gone by order of the Sachems to sing the calumet of peace to the Illinois."

When we have expected some misfortune, all that is not actually that misfortune seems a consolation. "He lives then!" exclaimed Celuta, and felt some relief of her anguish.

The savages soon surrounded the niece of Adario. Mila and Outougamiz rushed through the crowd and threw themselves on the bosom of their sister.

"I am the wife of thy brother," cried Mila, sobbing for joy, "but I am still thy little daughter."

"Thou art the wife of my brother," said Celuta, with an emotion of pleasure, for which she did not stop to account to herself—"Love him then and share his sorrows."

"Oh!" exclaimed Mila, "I have wept more for him in a few days, than I have wept for myself in my whole life."

The traveller, being conducted to her hut, found it in ruins, just as René himself had found it on his return. Celuta cast a melancholy look at the valley, at the river, at the path up the hill half-overgrown with grass, at all those objects in which her eye discovered traces of the flight of time. The hut was speedily restored to its former state by Outougamiz and Mila, who came to reside there with their sister.

The ingenuous couple, however, durst not relate to Celuta, already too severely tried, what had passed at Natchez during her absence; they durst not acquaint her with the misfortunes of Adario, the calumnies of which

René was the victim, and the virtuous uneasiness of Outougamiz. The daughter of Tabamica perceived that something was concealed from her: the absence of Chactas and René; the establishment of the French on the lands of the Indians; the excitement of the Natchez, who muttered words of peace with the same look as they would have sung the song of war—all appeared to her most extraordinary. Adario too had not come to see his niece, where was he? Celuta resolved to call upon her uncle, to solicit of him an explanation of these mysteries and intelligence respecting René.

Covered with a veil, she went forth from the hut when the stars, already chased from the east by the dawn, seemed to have fled to the western part of the firmament. She glided along the meadows, like those morning vapours which follow the courses of streams; she arrived at the great village, sought the hut of Adario, and found but a heap of ashes.

A hunter chanced to be passing. "Hunter," said Celuta, "where is now the dwelling of Adario?" The hunter pointed with his bow to the forest, and pursued his way.

The sister of Outougamiz advanced towards the wood. She perceived at the entrance the daughter of Adario, a vigilant centinel, watching at a distance the motions of her father. The Sachem was slowly walking among the trees like one of those spectres of night which vanish at dawn of day. His bald head and his bare limbs were wet with dew: his hatchet, so terrible in battle, resting on one of his naked shoulders close to his ear, seemed to be exhorting him to vengeance.

Celuta had not courage to accost the Sachem; she heard him heave deep sighs. The veteran suddenly turned his head, and cried, in a menacing tone: "Who is following me?"

"'Tis I," mildly answered Celuta.

"Thou, my niece! Show me not thine infant; my hands are ravenous."

"I have not brought my daughter," replied the wife of René, who was already embracing the knees of the Sachem. "And my cousin?" added Celuta, in a supplicating tone.

"Thy cousin!" said Adario; "where is she? let her come! she has nothing more to fear from my embraces."

The daughter of Adario, seated on a stone at some distance, beheld this scene with a mixture of terror and envy. She ran up at the sign made by Celuta. For the first time since her return from Fort Rosalie, she was pressed to the heart of a father, by that hand which had deprived her of a child. Adario, a head taller than the two females, and pressing them to his breast with the same arm and hand that held the hatchet, looked like a woodman who is going to cut down two shrubs covered with flowers.

The Sachem disengaged himself from the embraces of the women. "It is not time," said he, "to weep like a stag; 'tis blood that we want." Pointing with one hand to the ground, and with the other to the canopy of the trees: "There," said he to Celuta, "there is the bed, and there the roof which the strangers have left me.'

"Was it they who burned the hut?" asked Celuta: "thy children can build thee another."

Adario's lips quivered; with a look of wildness he grasped the hand of his niece: "My children, sayst thou! my children! they are free. They will not rebuild my hut in the land of slavery."

Adario threw from him with violence the hand of Celuta. The daughter of the Sachem hid her face, bathed with tears, in her hair. Celuta then remarked that her cousin had not her child with her; the dreadful truth flashed across her mind.

The wife of René strove to alleviate these sorrows, with the cause of which she was yet unacquainted, by words of affection. "Sachem," said she, "thou art a rampart for the Natchez; and I hope my husband will soon return bearing necklaces of peace."

"Call not," rejoined the old man, "call not that wretch, whom the wrath of Athaënsic has cast upon these shores, thy husband. If thou yet cherishest any attachment for him, begone from my sight: let not the rock which serves for my couch be polluted by the print of thy footsteps."

"Ah!" exclaimed Celuta, "here is the beginning of the mysteries of which I came to beg an explanation! Well Adario! what is it then that René has done? Speak, I listen to thee."

Adario leant against an oak, and recapitulated to Celuta the long series of calumnies invented by Ondouré. At this disclosure, which might have been expected to over-

whelm the Indian woman, you should have seen her assume a serene look and a bold countenance. "I breathe again!" she exclaimed. "Dear and unhappy husband! had I ever suspected thee, thou wouldst now be pure in my sight as the dews of heaven! Let the whole world declare thy guilt, I proclaim thee innocent. Let the universe abhor, I shall have the felicity to love thee without rival. I forsake thee when thou art calumniated, persecuted!"

Great souls understand one another: Adario admired his niece. "Thou art of my blood," said he, "and therefore it is that the love of country will triumph in thy heart over the love of a man. What canst thou oppose to that which I have told thee?"

"What can I oppose to it?" sharply rejoined Celuta. "The ill fortune of René. My husband guilty! No, that he is not! Thou hast said too much Adario, to convince me. Hast thou not even talked to me of Mila? It

is for me to settle matters with my heart, to endure my sorrows, if I have any; but to strive to make me believe him guilty of treason to the Natchez out of resentment for an infidelity which would concern myself alone, O Sachem, I blush for thy virtue! I knew not that thy great heart was so keenly alive to a woman's grievances!"

The fury of Adario was roused: in this devotedness of conjugal love he saw nothing but the weakness of a mind fascinated by passion. Offended by the expressions of Celuta he exclaimed; "Beware, wretched servant of a White, beware lest an unworthy love cause thee to hesitate about thy duties. Know that if thy blood were demanded by the country, this hand, which strangled my son, would not be long in reaching thee!" Hurrying from the oak against which he had supported himself, Adario sought the den of bears, where he should not be annoyed by the sight of men: as insensible to the wound

he had inflicted, as the dagger which feels not the throes of the heart that it has stabbed.

The blow struck to the very sources of life; the victim struggled against the shaft at the moment when she was pierced by it, but as the wound cooled it was attended with the keenest pain. Celuta did not believe the guilt of René, but that he whom she loved should be accused was sufficient to rack her with anguish: she did not believe the alleged inconstancy of her husband; she would never suppose René capable of giving his mistress as a wife to his friend; but what can reason, exalted sentiments, and generosity of disposition, effect against those vague suspicions which steal across the heart? We may discard, we may repel them, 'tis all in vain! they recur like idle dreams which are repeated in the course of a restless slumber.

With faltering steps Celuta reached her hut, where she found her amiable guests.

"Brother," said she, as she entered, "I know all: some plot is hatching. Save thy friend!"

"That is the sort of talk for me!" exclaimed Mila, stretching forth her sweet face with a courageous look. "It is not like thee Outougamiz, who art always sad as a wounded deer. Let us save René! 'tis what I was saying just now."

The two sisters and the brother sat down on the same mat, laid their heads together, and began to consider how they could save René. The combinations of the good are not like the conspiracies of the wicked: it is easy to do an injury, difficult to repair one. The grounds of the secret were unknown to the wife and the two friends of René; they could not therefore apply a remedy to an evil with the nature of which they were not acquainted. Mila had no other expedient to propose than to kill Ondouré: she supported by her resolute spirit the brother and

sister, whose souls, she said were as heavy as the flight of a white eagle. "The Sachems," added she, "may have more wisdom than we, but they do not love. Let us oppose our hearts to their heads, and we shall know well how to act when the proper moment arrives."

Ondouré's passions were more and more inflamed the nearer he approached the consummation of his nefarious designs. Celuta, on her return from her pilgrimage, looked quite divine in the eyes of the villain. A woman in tears, a woman who has just performed an extraordinary action, possesses irresistible charms: the more the soul is raised towards heaven the more attractions the person acquires; and the criminal, for his own torment and that of his victim, particularly admires that beauty which is combined with virtue. "What!" said Ondouré, "that woman so devoted to my rival would not bestow on me so much as a smile! Celuta, thou shalt be

mine; I will satiate my desires on thee, wert thou even in the arms of death!"

Ondouré nevertheless felt great uneasiness amidst his triumph: the jealousy of the female chief, which had slumbered during the troubles at Natchez and the absence of Celuta, now blazed forth afresh, and threatened the guardian of the Sun with an explosion that could not fail to undo him. An unexpected circumstance was on the point of producing the catastrophe which he dreaded.

The festival of the fishery had been proclaimed, a sacred festival which no person could be excused from attending. Celuta accordingly went to it with her brother and Mila: the high-priest gave directions for a general dance of the women. The sister of Outougamiz was obliged to join in this religious performance: affected by her recollections, and yielding to the impulse of an excited imagination, she infused language into her steps, for dancing has its language.

Sometimes she raised her arms towards heaven, like the branch of a supplicant, at others she bowed her head like a rose drooping on its stalk. Celuta's air of languor and sadness seemed to heighten the effect of her charms.

Ondouré devoured with his eyes the interesting savage; while Akansie, who had never lost sight of him, was ready to roar like a lioness. In the illusion of her passion, she conceived that she could compete with her rival, and went down into the arena. The motions of the jealous woman were harsh; her hands worked convulsively: her steps were marked by short and irregular intervals; guilt seemed to press heavily upon the spring which governed her movements. Ashamed of her, the guardian of the Sun turned his face another way: the female chief perceived this, and not having courage either to break off or to continue the dance, she began to turn round on one leg with a kind of howl.

Mila, with a view to keep her sister in coun-

tenance and to make game of Akansie, now leaped upon the turf. Her feet and arms were displayed in brilliant and graceful movements; she waved like a young poplar kissed by the breeze: the smile of love was on her lips, the intoxication of pleasure in her eyes; she was like a bounding fawn, a bird in flight; she sported, fluttered, swam in the air, like a butterfly.

The contrast exhibited by the three women astonished the Natchez and the French who were present at the festival: they were like grief, jealousy, and pleasure, mingling their steps. A hymn, usually sung at this ceremony, was repeated in dialogue by the dancers. Celuta said:

"Begone, wanderer of the wilderness: the sound of thy lament is more disagreeable to me than that of the storm which destroys the harvest: I hate the unhappy. My hut delights in solitude: never did a grave turn me

out of my way; I trample upon it and pass over its turf."

The female chief responded:—

"I am a stranger; I am the black snake which does no harm. My husband is far off, my child is going to die: matron of the lonely hut, be kind, supply my craving hunger with food; the Spirits will reward thee for it: he whom thou lovest will never be afar off nor thy infant ready to die."

Mila replied:

"Come to my hut, come, poor stranger: wo to them who repulse the unfortunate! Come, sue no more to that matron. She is a woman of blood: her hands are murderous; the lips of her child did not kiss her breast; they were a torment to her. When her child said, 'Mother!' she never had occasion to smile. Come to my hut, poor stranger: wo to those who persecute the innocent!"

It was high time that this dance should cease: Celuta and Akansie were ready to

swoon. Chance had assigned to each of them a part opposite to her real situation and character: the effect was too powerful for them. What a lesson for the female chief! the persecutor had for a moment changed places with the persecuted, that the former might have some idea of her own injustice. When the song was over, and the three women mingled their voices in chorus, the tones which they produced extorted from the multitude a cry of astonishment. The mother of the Sun abruptly quitted the games, motioning Ondouré to follow her, and he durst not disobey.

The wanton couple arrived at the hut of the Sun. Akansie burst out into reproaches. "And is this the man," she exclaimed, "for whom I have sacrificed every thing! Honour, peace, virtue, are all lost in the fatal passion that consumes me. For thee I have given up my soul to the evil Spirits; for thee I have consented to the death of the Great

Chief. I have approved all thy misdeeds: a slave to thine ambition as to thy love, I have studied to gratify the least of the caprices of thy crimes. Happy as it is possible to be under the tortures of remorse, I said to myself—he loves me! Spirits of darkness, teach me what I must do to secure his heart! With what new crime must I pollute my hands to give more charms to my endearments? Speak, I am ready: let us overthrow the laws, let us usurp the supreme authority, let us sacrifice our country, and, if need be, the royal infant whom I bore in this bosom!"

These words, bursting impetuously from a breast in which they had long been pent up, suffocated the wretched Akansie: she sank in the convulsions of despair at the feet of Ondouré. Dreading the revelations which she might make, the monster had for a moment a thought of stifling his accomplice during this crisis of remorse, before repentance should restore her to innocence; but he still

needed the influence of the female chief; he therefore resorted to the means of reviving her, and strove to pacify her by words of love. "Thou canst no longer deceive me," said she; "I have been but too credulous. I have seen thine eyes doating upon my rival; I have seen them turned from me with disgust. I reject thy caresses; thou wouldst reproach thyself for them, or, perhaps, whilst lavishing them upon me, thou wouldst offer them in the recesses of thy heart to that Celuta who scorns thee."

Akansie paused, as if alarmed at what she had said: her eyes were bloodshot, her bosom heaved, and broke the wreaths of flowers with which it was encircled. She went up to the agitated chief, rested her hands on the shoulders of the warrior, and, in a choaked voice, her lips nearly touching those of the traitor: "Mark me," said she; "no more love! I now want but revenge! I have furthered thy plans; thou must promote mine.

Let Celuta and her husband be included in the massacre which thou meditatest. I wish to have in my hand that charming head, to hold it by its bloody hair for thee to kiss. Hesitate not to make me this present, or to-morrow I will assemble the nation, I will restore its lustre to virtue which thou hast tarnished, I will divulge thy crimes and my own, and we shall receive together the punishment due to our wickedness."

Akansie, with her eyes fixed on those of Ondouré, strove to read his thoughts. "Is that all thou askest to assure thyself of my love?" retorted the infernal wretch, in a chilling tone, "thou shalt be satisfied: thou hast given up René to me, thou shalt have thy will with Celuta."

"But before she is thine!" cried Akansie. At this exclamation, Ondouré involuntarily shook his head: the villain saw that his secret purpose was guessed. He receded a few

paces. "Well then," cried he in his turn; "I must promise thee all!"

He went forth, meditating a deed which should relieve him from the fear of the publication of those crimes which he had already committed. The odious paramours separated, each filled with the deepest horror of the other: at the mere recollection of what they had discovered in one another's souls their hair stood erect.

Celuta, whose head had just been demanded and promised, returned to her hut more languid than ever: she found Amelia in a violent fever. Mila took the child in her arms: "Daughter of René," said she, "if thou shouldst die, I will go in the morning to inhale thy soul with the fragrant odours of the dawn. I will then give thee back to Celuta, for what would become of us if another woman should snatch thee from us, and thou wert to descend, for instance, into the bosom of Akansie?"

Outougamiz, who overheard this soliloquy, exclaimed: "Mila, thou art all our joy and all our grief. Art thou then going soon to gather up a soul? Thou makest me long to die, that I might be born again in thy bosom."

The idea of death, softened as it was by this pleasing belief, could not, however, enter the heart of a mother without alarming her. That mother enquired in vain for information concerning her husband. Nothing had been heard of René since his departure. Chactas was absent: Captain Artaguette and Jacques, the grenadier, after passing a short time at Fort Rosalie, had been sent to an advanced post on the frontiers of the savage tribes; Celuta found herself deprived of all her supports at once, and she was now about to lose also the protection of Outougamiz.

One evening, seated with her sister at some distance from the hut, she heard a noise in the dark: Mila declared that she saw a spectre. "It is no spectre," replied a voice,

"'tis Imley come to visit Celuta."—"Black warrior!" exclaimed Celuta, "what brings thee hither? Is Glazirne with thee, that stranger-dove, which fostered my little one under her wings?"

"Glazirne is still a slave," replied Imley, "but I have broken my chains and Izephar's. Ondouré, the famous chief, supports me in the forest, till the meeting at the great lake."

"What meeting meanest thou?" asked the astonished Celuta.

"Hush!" replied Imley, "'tis a secret with which I am not thoroughly acquainted, but Outougamiz is to be sent on a journey. Celuta, we shall all be free! Izephar is with me; since she became a fugitive she has never looked so handsome. If thou wert to see her in the long grass where I hide her by day, thou wouldst take her for a young lioness. When night returns we saunter about, talking of our country, to which we shall soon return. Already do I hear the crowing of

the cock belonging to my cottage; already do I see through the trees the smoke of the pipes of the Zangars!" Imley returned dancing and singing to the forest, leaving Mila laughing and delighted with the black caribou.

The indiscreet levity of the African filled Celuta with fresh alarms. What journey could it be on which Outougamiz was soon to set out, and concerning which he had never opened his lips?

Outougamiz could not have talked of this journey, for as yet he knew nothing about it.

Imley, the ringleader of the Blacks, whom Ondouré had seduced from their masters for the purpose of arming them at some future time against the Whites, was not himself acquainted with the details of the plot; he knew merely a few particulars, which it had been deemed necessary to communicate to him, in order to keep up his courage and that of his companions.

The appearance of Imley preceded but a few hours that of Adario. The Sachem came to Celuta's hut in quest of his nephew: he led him to a bare and barren plain where every kind of surprise was impossible, and thus addressed the young man:

"A general meeting of the Indians for the deliverance of the red skin has been summoned in the name of the Great Spirit by the Natchez. Four messengers have been dispatched with the calumet of alliance to the four points of the horizon: particular quarrels are awhile suspended. The calumet has been delivered to the first nation which the messengers met with; that nation has carried it to another, and so on to the spot where the land is bounded by sky and water: no tribe has disobeyed the command of Kitchi-Manitou.* Deputies from all the nations are on their journey to the place appointed for the meeting, the rock of the great lake. The

* The Great Spirit.

council of the Sachems has nominated thee, together with the juggler and the guardian of the Sun, to attend this general meeting.

"Outougamiz, thou must go: thy country claims thy services; prove thyself worthy of the preference of the elders. If, however, thou feelest thyself weak, tell me so: we will seek another warrior eager to make his name live in the mouths of men. Thou wilt then take the petticoat of the old woman: by day thou shalt wander in the woods to kill little birds with a child's arrows: at night thou shalt return secretly to the arms of thy wife, who will protect thee; she shall give thee for posterity daughters whom no man will espouse."

Outougamiz eyed the Sachem with tears of indignation. "What have I done?" said he. "Have I deserved that my uncle should talk thus to me? When have I refused to spill my blood for my country? If ever I was fond of life this is not the moment."

"Cherish this noble ardour," cried Adario. "Yes! I see thou art ready to sacrifice—"

"What?" asked Outougamiz, interrupting him.

"Thyself," replied the Sachem, sensible of the imprudence of the expression which had half escaped his lips. Go, nephew, hasten thy departure; thou wilt learn the rest at the rock of the great lake." Adario left Outougamiz, and the latter returned to the hut of René, oppressed with a new sadness for which he could not account. The reader knows from what deep hatred and wickedness Ondouré was desirous that Outougamiz should attend the general meeting, in order to bind him by an oath which he could not break.

Mila and Celuta watched Outougamiz; they saw him prepare his arms in a dark corner of the hut: he took the gold chain from his bosom, and said to it: "Manitou, shall I carry thee with me? Yes: the warriors say

that thou wilt cause my death; I will therefore keep thee." On hearing Outougamiz talk thus, the two sisters were beside themselves.

"Brother," said Celuta, "art thou then going a journey?"

"Yes, sister," answered the young warrior.

"Shalt thou be long absent?" enquired Mila. "I know that thou art going to the rock of the great lake."

"That is true," rejoined Outougamiz, "but how knowest thou this? It is my country that requires my services; I must go."

Mila could not find words to reply: seated on her mat she wept. An Allouez of the guard of the Sun appeared. "Warrior," said he to Outougamiz, "the assembled Sachems wait for thee."

"I will attend thee," answered Outougamiz. Mila and Celuta flew to their husband and brother. "When shall we see thee

again?" cried they, clasping him in their arms.

"The ivy," answered Outougamiz, "entwines only the aged oaks: I am yet too young for you to cling to me; I could not support you."

"If I bore a son of thine in my bosom," said Mila, "wouldst thou leave me! what shall we do without René and without Outougamiz?"

"Thou art wise as an aged matron, Mila," rejoined the savage.

"Trust not to my white hair," said Mila with a smile; "'tis summer snow on the mountain; it melts in the first sunshine."

The Allouez urged Outougamiz to depart. "Great Spirit!" ejaculated Celuta, "grant that he may bring us back happiness!"—a prayer which did not ascend to Heaven. The two women stood on the threshold of the hut, listening to the steps of Outougamiz which resounded in the dark. When they

could hear them no longer, they went in and wept till the dawn of day.

On reaching the cavern of the Sachems, Outougamiz was informed that Ondouré and the sorcerer had already set out with their retinue and the presents, and told that he must overtake them. The elders exhorted the brother of Celuta to support the honour and independence of his country. The same guard who conducted him to the councils guided him through the forest, in which were several cross-roads. Outougamiz pursued his course to the north, and found the sorcerer and Ondouré at the place specified: this spot was the very stream where Celuta had met with her husband and brother, on their return from the country of the Illinois.

On the north coast of Lake Superior rises a rock of prodigious height: its top is crowned with a forest of pines; from this forest issues a torrent, which, throwing itself into the lake, resembles a white zone hung in the azure

heaven. The lake expands like a boundless sea; the Isle of Souls is scarcely discernible at the horizon. On the shores of the lake Nature appears in all her wild magnificence. The Indians relate that from the summit of this detached rock the Great Spirit surveyed the earth after he had made it, and that, in memory of this miracle, he decreed that part of this earth should continue to be visible from the spot where he had contemplated the creation, fresh from his hands.

At this rock, which witnessed the works of the Great Spirit, all the Indian nations were to meet. A fleet, equally numerous and singular, began to assemble at the foot of the rock: the clumsy canoe of the Iroquois floated beside the light one of the Huron; the boat of the Illinois, scooped out of the single trunk of an oak, was wafted along with the raft of the Pawnees; and the round bark of the Poutoways was lifted by the same wave which tossed the kayak of the Esquimaux.

The deputies of the Natchez climbed the rude rock; young Indians of all the tribes accompanied them. On either bank of the torrent, in the recesses of the forest, they cut down pines and built an assembly-room, the seats of which were formed of trunks of felled trees. In the middle of this amphitheatre they kindled an immense fire.

All the nations having arrived, they ascended to the rock of the Great Spirit, and took successively the places prepared for them.

The Iroquois appeared first: no other nation dared pass before them. These warriors had shaven heads, with the exception of a tuft of hair, which formed with ravens' feathers a sort of diadem; their faces were painted red: their eye-brows were plucked out, and their long pinked ears were fastened together over the breast. Equipped with the arms of Europeans as well as Savages, each carried a carbine slung at his back, a

dagger in his girdle, and a club in his hand. Their step was proud, their look intrepid: they were the republicans of the state of Nature. They alone of all the Savages had resisted the Europeans, and subdued the Indians of North America. Canada was their country. They entered the council-hall dancing a war-dance, and took the most honourable place, on the right of the torrent.

After them came the Algonquins, the relics of a once mighty nation, which, after a war of three centuries, the Iroquois had almost exterminated. Their language became the polite language of the wilderness, and, like that of the Greeks and Romans in the ancient world, attested their past greatness. They sent but two young men as deputies: these warriors, of lofty stature and martial aspect, wearing neither paint nor ornaments, entered the inclosure without dancing. They passed with head erect before the Iroquois, and

placed themselves in silence on the left of the torrent facing their enemies.

The Hurons came third: lively, fickle, brave, with intelligent and animated countenances, they were the French of the New World. At all times allies of Ononthio's* and foes to the Iroquois, they occupied several hamlets about Quebec. They rushed into the council-hall, cast in passing a scornful look at the Iroquois, and seated themselves near their friends, the Algonquins.

A priest, followed by an old man, and the latter by an aged warrior, entered after the Hurons. The priest had no other garment but a red cloth rolled round him in the form of a scarf: he bore two burning brands, and muttered in a low tone certain magic words. The old man who followed him was a Sagamo, or King; his long hair flowed over his shoulders; his naked body was covered with hieroglyphics. The warrior, who walked

* The Governor of Canada.

after the old man carried on his head a cradle, in honour of children, who were adored in his country. These three savages represented the Abenaquee nations, dwelling in Acadia and on the coasts of Canada. They took the left of the Iroquois.

A man whose mien bespoke fallen majesty appeared upon the rock. A mantle of parrot's and blue jay's feathers, held by a string about his neck, floated behind him like wings. He was an emperor of those ancient tribes which of old inhabited Virginia and have since retired to the mountains on the confines of the Carolinas.

Another wreck of savage greatness came after the Virginian emperor; he was the chief of the Parioustees, indigenous tribes of the Carolinas, almost totally extirpated by the Europeans. The prince was young, with a proud air, but pleasing countenance; his whole body, rubbed with oil, was of a copper colour; an hemaphrodite, one of those

doubtful, being very common among the Patagonians, bore the arms of this chief. An ioneo, priest or juggler, preceded him, playing on a grotesque instrument.

Next appeared the deputies of the confederate nations of Florida, the famous Creeks, Muscogulges, Siminoles, and Cherokees. An aquiline nose, high brow, and long eyes distinguished these Indians from the other savages: the head of each was encircled by a fillet overshadowed by a plume of feathers. They wore by way of tunic a wide European shift, drawn together by a belt. The Mico, or King, walked at their head, and they were followed by Yamasee slaves and lovely women. This whole party entered with many ceremonies. The nations already seated rose and sang as it passed. The Creeks took their places at the bottom of the hall on the yet unoccupied trunks of the pines which faced the lake.

The Chickasaws and the Illinois, neigh-

bours of the Natchez, resembled them in their dress and arms. After them came the deputies of the tribes beyond the Meschacebé: the Clamoëts, who blew as they passed into the ears of the other savages by way of saluting them; the Cenees, who wore on the left arm a small buckler of leather to parry arrows; the Macoulas, who dwell in a sort of hives like bees; the Cachenouks, who have learned to fight on horseback, discharge slings with their feet, and cleave at full gallop the heads of their enemies; the Ouras with flattened scull, who as they walk, imitate the dancing of the bear, and whose cheeks are perforated by the bones of fishes.

Savages of small stature and mild and timid look, clad in a garment which reached half-way down the thigh, advanced. They and tufts of feathers on their heads, quipos in their hands, and rings and chains of that gold which was so fatal to them, about their arms and necks. A Cacique carried

before him the first calumet sent from the island of St. Salvador, to apprize the American nations of the arrival of Columbus. They were recognized as the sad relics of the Mexicans. Profound silence pervaded the assembly while these Indians were passing.

The Sioux, a pastoral tribe, the once hospitable hosts of Chactas, would have closed the procession, had not some Esquimaux been perceived behind them. Three pair of stockings and furred boots protected the thighs, legs, and feet of these savages; two coats, the one of swan, the other of seal skin, enwrapped the body; a hood drawn over the head almost hid their small eyes covered with spectacles; a tuft of black hair hanging from the brow mixed with the red beard. They led in leash dogs resembling wolves; in the right hand they held a harpoon, and in the left a leather bottle full of whale oil.

These poor barbarians, abhorred by the other savages, were repulsed from all the rows

in which they would have seated themselves: the Mexican Cacique called and made room for them near himself; Outougamiz thanked him for his hospitality. The assembly being now complete, a grand feast was served up. The warriors of the different nations were astonished at not seeing Chactas; they all supposed that they had been assembled by his direction, and the old men had brought their sons with them to profit by his wisdom. Ondouré stammered forth some excuses, in which persons better informed would have discovered his crimes.

At sunset the deliberations were to be opened: Outougamiz knew not what was about to be disclosed, but he had sinister forebodings. The entrance to the hall faced the west, so that the deputies, seated in the wood on the banks of the pines, had a vast view of the lake, with the sun inclined over the horizon: the fire was burning amidst the council. On the lofty rock, as on a pedestal, were upborne

both that forest coeval with the earth, and that assembly of savages, ready to deliberate on the independence of an entire world.

At the moment that the sun's disk touched the surface of the lake, beyond the Isle of Souls, the juggler of the Natchez, extending his arms towards the orb of day exclaimed: "Nations, rise!" Four interpreters of the four mother tongues of America repeated the injunction of the juggler, and the deputies rose.

Silence pervaded the assembly: nought was heard but the sound of the torrent which ran amidst the council, and ceased to roar as it threw itself into the lake, which it reached in the form of vapour.

All eyes were fixed on the juggler: he slowly unfolded a roll of beaver-skins; the last wrapper opened, and exhibited to view some human bones.

"There they are," exclaimed the priest,

"those awful witnesses! Sacred relics, ye shall again rest in a free soil. Yes; for you we are about to attempt such things as have never yet been beheld; upon you we are about to take an oath of secrecy more profound than the depths of the grave from which we have raised you."

The juggler paused, and then exclaimed: "Nations, swear." He then recited the form of the most solemn of oaths, which was as follows:

"By the Great Spirit, by Athaënsic, by the ashes of our fathers, by our country, by liberty, I swear to adhere faithfully to the resolution which shall be adopted, either by all the nations in general or by mine in particular. I swear that whatsoever be the measures which the nations in general or my nation in particular shall adopt in this assembly, I will keep them an inviolable secret. I will not reveal this secret either to my brothers or my sisters, either to my father or my mother,

either to my wife or my friends, and still less to those against whom these measures may be directed. If I reveal this secret, may my tongue be cut in pieces, may I be entombed alive, may Athaënsic pursue me, may my body after death be given a prey to flies, and my soul never arrive in the land of Spirits!"

Agitated by the Spirit of death, the juggler was silent: he rolled his eyes wildly over the assembly, which was filled with a religious terror. The savages extending all at once their armed hands, cried: "We swear!"

The sun sank below the horizon, the lake lashed its shores, the forest murmured, the fire of the council threw up a black smoke, the bones seemed to rattle: Outougamiz had sworn.

He had sworn! and how could he have avoided taking the oath? Religion, death, the country, had spoken! A hundred elders

had promised to be silent respecting the deliverance of all the American nations!

Ondouré had foreseen this inevitable result for Outougamiz; he cast on the unfortunate man a look fraught with a horrid joy: Outougamiz felt that baleful look dart across him. He raised his eyes, and read his misery in the face of the monster. A shriek burst from the bosom of the brother of Celuta: "René is dead!" cried he. "I have slain my friend!"

This exclamation, this despair, disturbed the assembly. Ondouré, in a whisper, explained to the Sachems that this nephew of the great Adario's had at times paroxysms of phrenzy, the effect of a spell thrown upon him by a magician of the white skin. The priests surrounded the young savage, and pronounced some mystic words over him. Outougamiz, recovering from the first shock of his grief, durst not utter any further complaints before the ministers of the Great Spi-

rit: he listened to the deliberations which now began. He had still left a vague hope that he should find means to escape woes which he foresaw, but with which he was yet unacquainted, because he knew not what was about to be proposed.

Ondouré spoke in the name of the Natchez. Six Sachems appointed to commit to memory the speech of the chief, divided among them the sticks which were to serve to note the part of the harangue that each of them was required to retain.

"The tree of peace," said Ondouré, "spreadits branches over the whole land of the people of the red skin, who supposed themselves to be alone in the world. Our fathers lived together under the shade of the tree: the forests knew not what to do with their roebucks, and the lakes with their fish.

"Give twelve strings of blue beads."

The juggler of the Natchez threw twelve strings of beads amidst the council.

"One day," resumed Ondouré, "ah fatal day! a rumour came from the East: this rumour said: 'Warriors vomiting fire and riding upon sea-monsters are come from beyond the shoreless lake.' Our ancestors laughed: Mexican warriors whom I see here, ye know whether rumour spake truth or not.

"Our fathers, at length convinced of the arrival of the strangers, began to deliberate. They said: 'Though the strangers are white, they are nevertheless men; we owe them hospitality.'

"Allured by our wealth, the Whites landed on all parts of our shores. Mexicans, they buried you in the earth; Chickasaws, they obliged you to retire into the wilderness; Paraoutees, they exterminated you; Abenaquees, they poisoned you with a powder; Iroquois, Algonquins, Hurons, they destroyed you one after another; Esquimaux, they robbed you of your nets! and as for us unfortunate Natchez, we are at this moment sink-

ing under their perfidies. Our Sachems have been put in chains; the soil which covered the ashes of our ancestors is tilled by strangers whom we had received with the calumet of peace.

"Give twelve elk-skins for the ashes of the dead."

The juggler gave twelve elk-skins.

"But," continued Ondouré, "why need I enlarge on the calamities which the strangers have inflicted on our country? You see those unjust men multiplied to infinity, while our nations are incessantly diminishing. They destroy us still more by their vices than by their arms: their mere approach is deadly to us; we cannot breathe the same air, we cannot live on the same soil with them. The Whites, as they advance and cut down our woods, drive us before them like a herd of deer without a harbour. Ere long we shall lack land for our further flight, and the last

of the Indians will be murdered in the last of his forests.

"Give a great sun of red stone for the calamities of the Natchez."

The juggler threw a stone in the form of the sun into the midst of the council.

Ondouré resumed his seat: the Savages struck the ground with their clubs in token of applause.

The Natchez chief, finding the minds of his auditors duly prepared to attend to him, conceived that it was time to unfold the secret. He again rose, and resumed his address. He began with observing that a sudden blow was the only method of delivering the Indians; that to attack the Whites by open force was to expose themselves to certain destruction, since sheir foes were sure to triumph from the superiority of their arms; that the crime being proved, the mode of punishing it was of little consequence; that to allow a pusillanimous pity to get the better of them, was to sacrifice

the liberty of generations unborn to the petty considerations of the moment. "Hear then," he proceeded, "what the Natchez propose to you."

Silence more profound than ever reigned in the assembly: Outougamiz felt his skin cleave to his bones.

"In all places where there are Whites it is expedient that the Indians should appear to be their friends and even their slaves. Some night the children of the red skin will rise all at once and extirminate their foes. The black slaves will assist us in our vengeance which will be their own; two races of men will be delivered by one and the same blow: those Indians among whom there are no strangers, shall join their oppressed brethren to accomplish the work of justice.

"The moment for this justice shall be the period of the great games of the nations. These games will afford a natural pretext for assembling in numbers; but as it is essential

that the blow be struck every where the same night, let bundles of reeds be formed, each containing so many reeds as there are days till the commencement of the games, till the day of execution. These bundles shall be committed to the care of the jugglers; every night they shall draw out a reed and burn it, so that the burning of the last reed shall mark the last hour of the Whites. Throw down a dagger."

The juggler threw a dagger at the feet of the warriors.

Here the words of Ondouré were broken, as are sometimes those iron chains which fetter prisoners in dungeons: the council, relieved from a painful attention, began to be violently agitated. A murmur of horror, astonishment, censure, and approbation, ran through the ranks of the assembly, grew gradually louder, and soon burst into a thousand clamours. The savages, mounted on the pine logs, were lighted only by the flames of the

fire amid the darkness of night; seen between the boughs and the trunks of the trees you would have taken them for people dispersed among the ruins and columns of a burning city. All were anxious to speak at once: they threatened each other; they brandished their clubs; the war-whoop raised on the top of the rock died away on the bosom of the lake, in which the fire of the council was mirrored like a meteor ominous of ill.

The sorcerers running to and fro, shaking sticks, and handling snakes, instead of restoring peace only augmented the uproar. The principles dearest to mankind, the liberty of all ages, the morality of all eternity, were assailed. Ondouré had conceived the crime and the details of the crime, the plan and the means of execution, with the ferocity of a tiger and the craft of a serpent. Tranquillity, however, was by degrees restored. Outougamiz was about to speak, but was severely reprimanded by the Sachems: the Iroquois

had a right to deliver their sentiments first. The chief of that nation rose, and the assembly lent an attentive and anxious ear to the opinion of so famous a people.

The speaker first repeated, according to custom, the whole harangue of Ondouré, each division of which was prompted by one of the six Sachems charged with the sticks of memory. Then in answer to this speech he thus proceeded:

"The proposal of the chief of the Natchez is grand, but is it just? Chactas, my old friend, is not here, neither do I see Adario: the eyes of Chactas are fallen like two stars beneath a sky portending storm: I have said it.

"We are not the friends of the Whites: for two hundred snows we have been fighting them; but does injustice authorize murder? shall we, in avenging ourselves, become like the people of the white skin? The Iroquois is an oak, which opposes the hardness of its

wood to the hatchet that attempts to cut it; but it lets not its boughs fall to crush him by whom it is stricken. People are not free because they call themselves free: the first stone of the hut of liberty is virtue. I have said it.

"The Iroquois conceived that the object of this meeting was to associate for the purpose of lifting the hatchet.* Would you sing the war-song to the stranger?—the Iroquois will head you. Let us march, let us fly! The Iroquois roars like a bear; he cleaves the waves of the white skin, he shatters heads with his club, he cries to the strongest of the Whites, 'Follow me!' He leaps into the ditch; with his body he forms you a bridge, like a liane, to cross the river of blood, to restore liberty to the red skin. Such is the Iroquois; but the Iroquois is not a polecat, to suck the eggs of the bird while she is asleep. I have said it."

The speaker, in delivering the latter part

* Declaring war.

of this harangue, imitated at every word the object from which he borrowed the image. "Let us march!" said he, and he marched: "let us fly!" and he extended his arms. He roared like a bear; he struck the pines with his club, he mounted to the escalade, he bent his body into an arch like a bridge.

Acclamations of alternate joy and rage shook the sacred wood; and Outougamiz cried aloud, "Behold the Iroquois, Chaqtas, myself, René, Celuta, Mila!"

Ondouré was seized with consternation: all his schemes had been abortive, and had produced only crime. A Chickasaw now impetuously burst forth into the following words, which, though they broke the order of deliberation, restored his lost hopes to the guardian of the Sun:

"What!" said the Chickasaw, "is it really an Iroquois to whom we have just been listening? Does the nation which engaged to aid us in a sacred cause, now abandon us? If

those proud cypresses which once lifted their heads into the sky have become creeping parasite-plants; may they be trampled under the feet of the stranger! As for the Chickasaw who is resolved to deliver his country, he votes for the plan of the Natchez."

This speech made a deep impression on the Iroquois, who styled the Chickasaws fugitive deer and cruel ferrets. The Chickasaws replied by calling the Iroquois parrots and wolves changed into tame dogs. All these nations thus divided, seemed ready to attack hand to throw one another into the lake with the waters of the torrent and the ruins of the pile, when the jugglers succeeded in obtaining a momentary silence. The high priest of the Natchez, from among the branches of a pine, the trunk of which he held in his arms, cried aloud, "In the name of Michabou, the Spirit of those waters whose empire you now trouble, cease your fatal discords! No nation present on this occasion is

obliged to follow the opinion of another nation: all which has been promised is secrecy, and this promise cannot be violated without ruin to all. Three opinions now divide our councils: the first votes that we reject the plan of the Natchez, the second adopts it, and the third advises that we preserve our neutrality. Well! let each nation follow its own opinion; this will not hinder those who desire a decisive vengeance from accomplishing it. When our brothers who have remained in peace upon their mats shall behold our success, perhaps they will determine to imitate us."

The wisdom of the conjuror was applauded, and his advice followed. Then the division of the assembly took place; the Indians from the north and the east, with the Iroquois at their head, declared themselves opposed to the project of the Natchez; the people of the west, the Mexicans, the Sioux, and the Pawnees, said that they neither blamed nor disap-

proved the project, but that they desired to live in peace: the people of the south, and those who, turning towards the north, dwelt on the banks of the Meschacebé; the Chickasaws, the Yazous, and the Miamis, entered into the alliance. But all these nations, however diverse their opinions, had sworn by the ashes of the dead that they would keep the secret inviolable, and all protested anew, with all the warmth of that Indian faith which is so rarely broken, that they would be true to their oaths.

"Now then is the fate of the Whites among the Natchez decided!" cried Ondouré, in a transport of joy, at viewing the great number of the nations of the south who were engaged in the plot.

Till this period a ray of hope had cheered the unfortunate Outougamiz; but when he found that one third of the assembly had declared in favour of the project of the guardian of the Sun, the friend of René felt like a man

from whom the Creator has withdrawn the light of his countenance. He advanced, or rather crawled into the midst of the assembly. Some, according to their position, viewed him as a black shadow on the fires of the pile: others, like the Spirit of Grief, seen through the floating veil of flame.

"Well!" said he in a hollow voice, but which was distinctly heard in the immense silence both of earth and Heaven, "I must then slay my friend! It is I, doubtless, Ondouré, who shall be charged to strike the blow. Nations, ye have surprised me into this: alas! it was no difficult task. I am simple; but ye will never surprise the friendship of Outougamiz. He will be silent, for he has sworn to be secret, but when ye are ready to strike the blow, Outougamiz, with this Manitou of gold, will stand before René. Forge the sword long enough: for before it touches the heart of my friend, it must pass through mine."

The young man paused: his eyes were raised towards the firmament; he looked like the Angel of friendship reclaiming his heavenly abode. The Sachems listened full of thought; they saw through this speech the glimpse of a secret which they considered important to be known: they commanded silence in the council: the prodigies of friendship wrought by Outougamiz were known throughout all the wilderness, and had excited the admiration of all the young savages.

The brother of Celuta spoke again, looking round on the assemby: "Warriors, why are ye mute? Teach me what I must say to my sister and my wife when I behold them. What should I say to René himself? must I say to him, 'Stag, whom I found among the marshes of the Illinois, let me again open the wounds which my hand once closed.'"

Then Outougamiz, pressing both hands upon his bosom, cried out—"Yes, I will tear thee from my heart, thou fearful secret!

Bones of my fathers, in vain ye rise and pass along before me: I will speak; yes I will speak! I will not be an assassin! René, listen, dost thou hear? Thou knowest what has passed in the council—repeat it not!—But René, art thou not guilty? Oh God, I have spoken. I have violated my oath; I have betrayed my country!" Outougamiz sunk down before the pile, and had not the warriors near him upheld him, he had fallen into the flames. He was placed at a distance on a couch formed by branches.

This fainting fit gave an opportunity to the conjuror and Ondouré to repeat what they had already said of the madness of Outougamiz, which, according to them, had been caused by a spell. Now, impatient to depart, the nations all rose, and the brother of Celuta was forgotten.

The tribes which had adopted the plan of the Natchez, received from the conjuror the funeral sheaves, in each of which

were twelve reeds. The grand festival, which lasted twelve days, began on the eighteenth day of the moon of hunting: it was on this very day that the conjurors among the different allied nations were to burn the first of the reeds: the others, withdrawn in the eleven successive nights, announced the massacre by the exhaustion of the sheaf.

The Indians began to descend the narrow and dangerous passage which led to the foot of the rock. When they arrived on the bank, the morning had lit up the horizon, but it was sombre, and the sun enveloped in clouds announcing a tempest, had risen without brightness. The Indians re-embarked in their canoes, directing them towards all the points of the horizon; and the fleet speedily dispersing, was lost in the immensity of the lake. The Conjuror and Ondouré abandoned the last the rock of the Council. They invited Outougamiz, who had now recovered his senses, to follow them: but the friend of

René, looking at them with horror, replied, "that never would he remain in the society of two men so wicked;" and they quitted him without insisting farther. What mattered it to Ondouré whether Outougamiz did or did not precipitate himself from the heights? Outougamiz was bound by an oath which he was not likely ever to break; but if in his despair he should even attempt self-destruction, the secrecy of the tomb seemed still safer to Ondouré than that of virtue.

Outougamiz remained seated on the extremity of the rock opposite the lake, just where the torrent, quitting its level, leaped into the abyss; and all the grandeur of sentiment which this spectacle inspired, seemed naturally to ally itself with the grandeur of a friendship as unfortunate as it was sublime. The waves of the lake, driven by the wind, dashed against the banks, from which they tore fragments: every where deserts were seen around this inland ocean; itself a solitude, vast and

profound; every where showing the absence of men and the presence of God in his works. His elbow leaning on his knee, and his head resting on his hand, his feet hanging carelessly over the abyss,—behind him the rock of council lately so animated, now an entire solitude—Outougamiz was long before he could form his resolution: at last he determined to live. If the Whites should discover the plot, who was to defend his country, and Celuta, and Mila, whose bosom perchance held the son of Outougamis? The secret could not be revealed to René, because René himself was perhaps guilty, as affirmed by the Sachems, but were there no means of saving the white men? Chactas would return, Chactas would be initiated into the mystery: might not that Sachem in his wisdom prevent all these evils? If Outougamiz were to throw himself into the lake his death would be useless to René: he would still perish, while Outougamiz, by prolongi

his life, might find an unexpected opportunity of saving the life of his friend. Ah! if he could but divulge the secret to Mila, who has so much talent, how soon might all be arranged! Who knew besides whether the innocence of René might not finally be discovered? Oh then what happiness! How all obstacles would disappear, how all would pass from despair to the height of joy!

Outougamiz, after having thus debated with himself, rose up. "I will live," said he: "I will not leave on Celuta the weight of all these misfortunes: I will not unworthily seek repose in the tomb. Adieu, forest of blood! adieu, rock of malediction: may Athaensic choose thee for her altar!"

Outougamiz then hastened down the narrow path, leaving on the pile of council a few ashes yet smoking: an image of all that remains of the vain projects of man!

The brother of Celuta walked the whole day and part of the succeeding night: some Sloux

whom he met conveyed him in their canoes from river to river till he came to the Illinois; who, dreading a new invasion of the Natchez, had withdrawn two hundred leagues farther towards the west. Outougamiz, resuming his journey by land, crossed the plains which had witnessed the wonders of his friendship. The stake where René was to have burnt was still standing; Outougamiz embraced the sacred monument. He descended to the marshes, and gazed on the root on which he had sat, holding his friend in his arms: and he saw some of the dry reeds with which in the night he had covered the object of his cares; he even gathered some feathers of the birds whose flesh had nourished his brother. He thus addressed them: "Beautiful feathers, if ever I am destined to be happy I will bind you with threads of gold, and wear you on my brow in the festival. Could ye ever have thought that I was to slay my friend?"

This excellent warrior tried to find in his memory new sources of strength which should be equal to combat with the perils of René; he even steeped himself again, as it were, in his past misfortunes, that he might harden himself against the present evil: he exalted his friendship by his own example, even while he accused himself with having changed, and vowed the destruction of René. Thus reflecting, the Indian arrived among the Natchez: and there began those griefs which were never to end. Had René returned? How was he to support the first sight of him? and what was he to say to the two afflicted women?

René was not yet at Natchez. Ondouré alone and the conjuror had anticipated by two days the return of the unhappy Outougamiz. The days of Celuta and Mila had passed in the profoundest retirement. From habitual suffering and lassitude, the spouse of René had sunk into a profound

of misfortune that madness which seems a relaxation from grief, a sort of intermission from the fever of the soul, and leads either to cure or to death. It was only the eyes of Celuta that could still smile: her lips could do so no longer.

"Thou seemest now somewhat calmer," said Mila.

"Yes," replied her sister, "I am now accustomed to my bitter food: my heart nourishes itself now on the grief which it loathed before it was used to it."

The night which preceded the arrival of Outougamiz, the two Indians sat together longer than they were wont: and they talked of René, their inexhaustible subject. Even after they had retired to their mat, they continued to converse, and, in the midst of their adversity forming projects of happiness, they fell asleep in hope, as the sick child slumbers over the toy which has been placed in his cradle.

On awaking, Mila and Celuta saw before them Outougamiz, pale, weary, his eyes fixed, and his mouth half-open. They sprung from their couch. "My brother! my husband!" cried they both at once: "what is the matter? Is René dead? Are you about to die too?"

"All is over!" replied the Indian, without change of attitude, "ye are now neither wife nor sister."

"Is René then dead?" cried Celuta.

"What sayst thou?" rejoined Outougamiz, in a tone of savage joy, "is René dead? Then Kitchi-Manitou be praised!"

"Heavens!" cried Celuta, "thou desirest then the death of thy friend! But what danger now threatens him?"

"We are all lost!" murmured Outougamiz in a sombre tone. Then, disengaging himself from the arms of his wife and sister, he hurried out of the hut; Mila and Celuta following.

They were suddenly met by Ondouré. "Have ye seen Outougamiz?" said he, in a tone of alarm. "Yes," replied both at once: "he is out of his senses, and we are following in pursuit of him."

"What has he said to you?" rejoined the guardian of the Sun.

"He told us that we were all ruined," replied Celuta.

"Think not so," said the Chief, who had now assumed an air of quiet: "Every thing on the contrary goes on well, but Outougamiz is ill: I must seek Adario."

While Ondouré was departing, Outougamiz, by another road, was approaching the hut; he was walking slowly, with his arms folded on his breast. The two women, who were now advancing towards him, heard him speaking to himself, and saying, "Manitou of gold, thou hast deprived me of my reason: tell me now what I am to do?"

Mila and Celuta seized the unfortunate man by his garments.

"What would ye with me?" cried he. "Yes, I swear to love René still in despite of you all! I smile at the worms of the sepulchre, which already are devouring my living body. Yes! I will smite my friend, but I will kiss his wound, I will suck his blood, and when he is dead I will cling to his body, even till the corruption has passed into my bones."

The two distracted females embraced the knees of Outougamiz, who now recognized them. "It is we," said Mila, "speak to us!"

Outougamiz placed his hand upon her mouth: "What hast thou said? we are now to speak no longer unless it be as a grave: all now comes from the dead. There is a secret."

"A secret!" replied Mila warmly, "a secret with your friends? What then is going

on? Is it our lives or the life of René which is at stake?"

Then spoke Outougamiz: "Tear out my heart," said he to Mila, presenting to her his breast, to which his young spouse immediately applied her lips of fire.

"Do not thus tear away my life," said Celuta: "speak! my dear Outougamiz; come and take some repose with us in the hut."

A voice of thunder broke upon this scene. "Hast thou spoken?" said the voice: "hath the earth trembled under thy feet?"

"No, I have not spoken," replied Outougamiz, turning towards Adario, who entered, led by Ondouré: "but think not longer to find in me the docile Outougamiz; man of iron, carry your courage among the bears of Labrador; drink deliciously the blood of your children! as for me, I will only drink what you force into my mouth, and I will spit out even of that a portion in your face, and will

cover you with a stain which even Death shall never efface."

Adario was overwhelmed. "With what dost thou reproach me?" said he to his nephew. "My children!—barbarian, thou art a hundred times more barbarous than I."

There was no need of so strong an appeal to abate the resentment of Outougamiz.

"Pardon me," said he to the old man; "yes, I have been cruel in speech; yet Outougamiz is not so! I am unworthy of thy friendship, but leave me my own: let me die, and console, after I am gone those two women. I warn you that I must violate my oath,—that I must speak: I have not force of mind enough now to go on to the end."

"To console us!" cried Celuta; is he a man of consolation! 'Till now I have been silent, but I have listened, and divined that the subject of debate was the destruction of René. Outougamiz, go on! crown thy labours by the murder of him whom thou

didst once deliver! His dying voice would thank thee still for all thou hast done for him; and he would seek thy bloody hand to press it to his lips. Even when his eyes were too dim to gaze upon thee longer, they would turn to where thou wert, while the life-blood was ebbing away."

"Hearest thou, Adario?" said Outougamiz; "resist, if thou canst!"

Outougamiz seized Celuta, and, in the tenderness of his embraces, felt himself almost tempted to strangle her.

"Women," cried Adario, "retire hence with your tears."

"Yes, yes," cried Mila, "you may assume this menacing tone, but know that we will save René, in spite of thee and thy country itself: the last shall perish by my hands: I will set fire to the huts."

"Vile Ikouessen,"* cried the old man, "if ever thou darest to come into my presence

* Courtesan.

again with thy cursed tongue, thou shalt not escape!"

"Thou callest me Ikouessen," said Mila, "and of whom? of my deliverer? thou sayest true: and I should not be that which I am, had I not slept upon his knees!"

"Quit these women," said the old man to his nephew: "this is not a time for groans and tears. Come with those Sachems who await us." And Outougamiz suffered himself to be led away by Adario and Ondouré.

Mila and Celuta, finding their first efforts useless, tried other means to discover the secret of Outougamiz. From the enigmatical words of the young warrior, they knew there was a mystery, and by his grief they judged that this mystery concerned the brother of Amelia. Thus guessing, with all the activity of brotherly friendship and of conjugal love, they suspended their complaints, and agreed to separate, each wandering near the entrance of the caverns where

the council assembled. They hoped to catch a few words intuitive of their destiny.

That very evening Celuta proceeded to the Grotto of the Rocks, and Mila to the Cavern of the Relics.

On approaching the latter, the remembrance of moments past on that very spot, came vividly upon Mila. The Sachems were not in the cavern; Mila heard nothing; the dead tell no secrets. Celuta had been not more successful; and the two sisters returned to their homes, if not better informed, undiscouraged, and determining to recommence on another occasion.

Outougamiz did not make his appearance for several days; Adario had taken him to the cave where the allied chiefs were assembled, and where every one endeavoured, by the most affecting picture of a country oppressed, by the grossest falsehoods respecting René, and by the whole weight of the high-priest's authority, to counteract

the force of friendship. When the brother of Celuta wished to depart, the guards of the Sun had orders to follow him closely: some of the Sachems, and Adario himself, pursued his steps at a little distance.

He proceeded to the hut of René; Celuta was absent; Mila, alone, awaited the return of her friend. On seeing Outougamiz enter, she smiled between tenderness and surprise. Mila's smile had something charming in it which one would fain have passed a whole life in contemplating. "I thought," said she to her husband, "that you had altogether abandoned me. Where have you been? I have not seen you since the day of your return from the desert." She then made a sign to Outougamiz to sit down on the mat. Outougamiz replied, that he had been among the Sachems; and, full of a melancholy joy at hearing Mila speak to him so mildly, he went and sat by her.

Mila threw her arms about the neck of the

young Savage: "Thou art unfortunate," said she, "and I am unhappy. After so long an absence, why art thou not come rather to console me? Thou hast no longer thy reason, and I have scarcely mine. Let us retire to the forests; I will be thy guide; thou shalt walk by my side like the blind leading the blind. I will lift the fruits to thy lips, I will dry thy tears, I will prepare thy couch, thou shalt repose thy head upon my knees when thou art weary, and then thou wilt tell me thy secret. René will come to seek and to weep with us."

"Let him not weep!" said Outougamis; "if he weeps I must speak! I would have him promise not to love me, that so I might keep my vow. If he says that he loves me, I must slay him, because, otherwise, I should betray my country."

Mila flattered herself with the hope of discovering something: but all her graces and seductions were useless. Her caresses, or

of which would have been enough to induce others to sell the destinies of the universe, were in vain, when opposed to the gravity of grief and the bonds of an oath. Mila found on this occasion a power of resistance in her husband which she did not expect. She knew not to what an extent Outougamiz felt the passion of patriotism; what an empire religion exercised over him; what a power the idea of René's guilt added to his virtuous resolutions, and that this white man might divulge the secret to his brethren, if it was once revealed to him. Celuta, who resembled her brother much more in character, and who knew him better, had despaired from the beginning of making him tell what he thought it his duty to conceal; and she admired him with tears.

The autumn was approaching; that melancholy period when the bird of passage flies away, when the verdure withers, when the leaf falls, when the heat decreases, when the day

shortens, when the night lengthens, and when the frost crowns the long evening, all reminding the spectator of the destinies of man. The grand festival was shortly to be proclaimed; the day of massacre was approaching. No news of René had reached Celuta. She knew not whether she ought to fear or to hope for the return of the traveller. One morning an ecclesiastic from a distant mission entered her hut. He was not a priest equal in knowledge to Father Souël, nor was he zealous enough to become a martyr; but he was a charitable and a mild man. He never meddled with what did not concern him, and converted souls to the Lord only by the example of a holy life. He wore the gown and the beard of a Capuchin, without either humility or pride. He thought it perfectly natural that his order should have preserved the usages and the dress of old times, and equally so, that these should have changed.

Celuta met the missionary on his entrance

"Chief of Prayer," said she, "thou honourest me by coming to my hut; but its master is not here, and I fear that a woman may not receive thee so well as thou meritest." The father replied by a bow; adding; "I should not have inconvenienced you by my visit, if Captain d'Artaguette had not requested me to bring you a letter from your husband." Celuta blushed between hope and fear; she took the letter which the missionary gave her, and pressed it to her heart.

Mila, who was with her sister in the hut, holding little Amelia on her knees, would scarce allow time to offer hospitality to the missionary, so impatient was she to hear the explanation of the necklace. Celuta, more hospitable, prepared the slight repast.

While she was occupied with this duty, the missionary, seeing the daughter of René in the arms of Mila, blessed her, and asked if the child was christened. The infant did not seem frightened, and smiled at the old

priest. The latter, interrogated by the two sisters, pronounced, with tears in his eyes, an eulogy on Captain Artaguette and the brave grenadier Jacques. Celuta learnt with grief that her white brother, who had been stationed at a distant post, had been ill for several months.

Mila then said to the missionary, "Chief of the beard, hast thou never been repulsed from the huts?"

"My stick," replied the father, "is always behind the door." Celuta served refreshments. When this was done, she drew forth the letter from her bosom, and begged the father to translate it.

Inexplicable contradiction of the human heart! The very woman, who but the evening before was alarmed at the silence of her husband, now almost wished for a continuation of that silence! What did the letter contain? Did it announce the speedy return of René? or did it throw some light upon

the secret of Outougamiz? Did it confirm or dissipate the suspicions raised against René? Seated before the missionary, and fixing their eyes on his lips, the two sisters listened to sounds which had not yet been uttered. The father opened the letter, took his beard in his left hand, with the right lifted the paper to his eyes, and read in silence the first page.

As he proceeded, astonishment was evidently painted in his face. Celuta was like the prisoner of war who sits upon the tripod before being delivered to the flames; but Mila, losing patience, cried: "Explain to us the necklace; don't you understand it?" On this the father translated into Natchez, the following letter:

LETTER FROM RENE TO CELUTA.

"*From the Desert,*

"the thirty-second winter of my birth.

"I thought to have waited for you at the Natchez; but I was obliged to depart sud-

deadly, in consequence of orders from the Sachems. I know not what will be the issue of my journey: it may even happen that I shall see you no more. My conduct must have appeared to you so singular that I should be sorry to quit this world without justifying myself to you.

"I received from Europe, on my return from New Orleans, a letter which taught me the accomplishment of my destinies. I related my story to Chactas and to Father Souël; religion and wisdom alone ought to hear it.

"A terrible misfortune smote me in my early youth: this misfortune made me what you have seen me. I was beloved, too much beloved: the Angel who surrounded me with her mysterious tenderness, closed for ever, without drying up, the sources of my existence. All love was to me horrible: a model of womankind was before me, whom nothing human could approach; and though internally consumed by my passions, from an inex-

plicable contrast, I have been constantly suffering under the icy hand of misfortune.

"Celuta, there are some destinies so severe that they seem to accuse Providence itself. Even from the commencement of my life I have never ceased to feed my personal griefs, of which I bore the germ in myself, as the tree bears that of its fruit. A poison of an unknown nature mingled with all my feelings: I even reproached myself with indulging in those joys which spring up and vanish with youth.

"What do I now in the world, and what have I done there already? I was always alone, even when the victim was palpitating at the foot of the altar. That victim exists no longer: but the tomb has ravished nothing from me: it is not more inexorable to me than the sanctuary has been. Nevertheless I feel that something necessary to my life has disappeared: when I ought to rejoice at a blow which has delivered two

souls, I weep: I ask, as if it had been ravished from me, for what I am destined never to recover: I desire to die: and in another life the separation which is now destroying me, will still continue through the duration of eternity.

"Eternity! perhaps in my excess of love I may have understood that incomprehensible word. Heaven knew, and knows at the very moment when my hand is tracing these lines, what I might have been: but men have not known me.

"I write in the desert, under the shade of a tree, on the borders of a nameless stream, in a valley where tower the same forests which covered it from the beginning of time. I imagine, Celuta, that the heart of René now opens before thee: seest thou the extraordinary world which it contains? From this heart issue flames which want aliment, which would devour the creation without being satisfied, which would consume even

thee. Look to thyself, virtuous woman: withdraw from the abyss: leave it alone in my bosom! Almighty Father! thou hast called me in this solitude: thou hast cried unto me: 'René! René! what hast thou done with thy sister?' Am I then a Cain?"

CONTINUED AT DAWN.

"What a night have I passed! Creator, I thank thee! I have still strength, since mine eyes once more behold the light that thou hast made! my course was unenlightened in the darkness; yet my feet, as if instinct with intelligence, found themselves paths through the trees and the bushes. I searched for something that always evaded me; I embraced the trunks of the oaks, for my spirits wanted something to cling around. I fancied in my delirium that I felt the arid bark palpitate against my bosom: had my warmth of desire reached but one degree higher, I had loved material and insensible nature. My bosom naked and torn, and my hair dripping with the vapours of night, I

fancied I saw a woman, who threw herself into my arms, saying: 'Come and exchange our mutual flames, and resign life! let us mingle pleasures and death together! let the vault of heaven hide us by falling on our heads!'

"Celuta, you will think me mad: I have, however, only done you one wrong, and that is in having bound your fate to mine. You know whether René has resisted, and to what a prodigy of friendship he thought himself bound to sacrifice an independence which at least was fatal only to himself. An enormous misfortune has deprived me of the sweets of your affection and the happiness of being a father: I have seen with a sort of horror that my life was about to prolong itself beyond the period of my own existence. The blood which made this unhappy heart throb will animate that of my daughter; and I shall have transmitted to thee, my poor Amelia! both my melancholy and my misfortunes!

Already called by the earth, I cannot protect the days of thy infancy; nor, in later years shall I see developed in thee the soft image of thy mother, mingled with the charms of my sister and the graces of youth. Regret me not: in the age of the passions I should have been an evil guide.

"Celuta, I particularly charge you to be careful of Amelia: the name is fatal. Let her not be instructed in any of the arts of Europe: let her mother hide from her the excess of her tenderness; it is not good for her to be accustomed to be too much beloved. Let my name be never mentioned to my daughter; she owes me nothing: I did not even desire to give her life.

"Let the name of René remain for ever unknown to her; and when the strange destiny of him who bore it is related to her, let her meditate mournfully upon it without knowing the cause: I only wish to appear in her eyes what I am,—a melancholy dream.

"Celuta, in my hut there are some papers in my hand-writing: they contain the history of my heart: it can do no good, for no one would comprehend it: destroy these wild ravings.

"Return to your brother's roof: burn the cabin which I erected: sow plants among the ashes: and thus render to the forest the heritage which I have taken away from it. Efface the road which leads from the river to the door of my dwelling. I would not that there remained on the earth the slightest traces of my existence there. But I have written A NAME on some trees in the depths of the woods: it would be impossible to find them; therefore let it grow with the unknown oak which bears it: and the Indian hunter when he sees it, will fly from the aspect of characters which will seem to him engraved by an evil Spirit.

"Give my arms to Outougamiz; let that sublime friend make, in memory of me, one

last effort: let him live on. Chactas will follow, if he has not preceded me.

"Finally, Celuta, if I should die, you may perhaps search, after my life is extinct, for a union with a soul more equal than mine. But think not even then to receive with impunity the caresses of any other man: think not that his feeble embraces can efface from your heart those of René. I have clasped you to my bosom amid the desert, amid the howlings of the storm; and when I had carried you safely over a torrent, I have wished to stab you to the heart in order to fix happiness there, and to punish myself for having given thee that blessing. It is thou, O Supreme Being, source of beauty and of love, who hast created me as I am, and thou alone canst comprehend me! Oh why did I not precipitate myself amidst the foaming waves of some cataract! Then should I have re-entered the bosom of nature with all mine energies!

"Yes, Celuta, if you lose me, you will remain a widow; who could surround you with that flame which I always bear about me, even when I love not? Those solitudes which I rendered torrid would seem frozen to you by the side of another spouse. What would you seek among the woods and in the shade? There is no longer for you illusion, intoxication of the fancy, enthusiasm! In giving thee all, or rather in having given thee nothing, I have ravished every thing from thee: an incurable wound was rankling in the depths of my heart. Think not, Celuta, that a woman to whom I make avowals so cruel, for whom I have formed wishes so odious—think not that such a woman can ever forget the man who loved her with so extraordinary a love and as singular a hatred.

"I am weary of life: ennui has always preyed upon me: what interests other men touches not me. Shepherd or king, what should I have done either with crook or

crown? I should have been equally weary of glory and genius, of labour and of leisure, of prosperity and misfortune. In Europe and in America, both Society and Nature have fatigued me. I am virtuous without any pleasure in being so; and were I criminal I should be so without remorse. I would that I had never been born, or that I were for ever forgotten.

"Whether this be my last adieu, or whether I am to see you again, Celuta, something tells me that my destiny is about to be accomplished: if not this very day, it will only be the more fatal: delay with René but aggravates misfortune. Consider then this letter as containing my last words."

Celuta, even when the reading of the letter was over, refused to raise her head, which had sunk upon her bosom; all the sagacity of Mila was insufficient to give the explanation of the necklace, and all the religion of the

missionary to penetrate the meaning of the letter: but the heart of the spouse had better understood it. There is nothing so intelligent as unfortunate love. Celuta learned that she was not beloved: that even the ties of paternity had failed to attach René to her: that in his mind there was trouble, almost amounting to remorse, and that he repented of a misfortune as others would repent of a crime.

Celuta slowly raised her sunken brow. "My husband," said she, "is even more unfortunate than I believed him to be: an evil Spirit has persecuted him. I will be his guardian-angel."

The missionary returned the letter to the Indian, saying, "Suffering is our lot: the new alliance which Jesus Christ has made with men is an alliance of agony; his blood sealed it. I will pray for you."

He fell on his knees, and with his hands pressed together, he repeated the Lord's Prayer in the Natchez tongue. The calm

which it inspired dropped like balm upon a recent wound. When the father pronounced the words "Deliver us from evil," the two women sobbed with emotion. The missionary then, rising with difficulty, threw his cloak over his grey head, and approaching the door of the cabin with a grave pace, he took up his staff, and as rapidly as his age permitted, proceeded to bind up other wounds of the heart, in other places.

Mila, who had till now held Amelia, presented her to Celuta, who received her with a thousand tears and kisses. Mila, who guessed her sister's thoughts, said to her: "Thou wilt love her as her mother, and I will love her as her father."

Yet Mila felt her spirit somewhat discouraged. Who could have loved René too much? Even if the white warrior could be saved from death, what would it avail, since he refused to live? But Mila did not dwell

long on these reflections: she now said in her own character:

"We have wept enough about an obscure and ill interpreted necklace, which neither you, nor I, nor the bearded father can comprehend. Danger is at the entrance of our hut: why then need we add imaginary to real misfortunes? Between the reality of evil and the dreams of our own fancies we shall not know what to do. Let us now busy ourselves with the present, we will afterwards think of the future. Let us try to discover the secret, let us save René, and when we have saved him, let him explain all."

"Yes," replied Celuta, "let us save my husband." Mila took Amelia a moment in her arms, and then restoring her to her mother, said, "I wished to have a little warrior, I will hold thy daughter no longer: keep her to thyself: she prefers thee to me when she cries, and me to thee, when she laughs. Would not one say that the necklace makes even the infant shed tears?" And Mila went

out to attempt the discovery of the
cret.

René had written another letter to the
chems to inform them that the Illinois
peared ill disposed to receive the calume
peace. Chactas, more fortunate in his
sion, had obtained all he wished from
English in Georgia, and was preparing tc
turn. The guardian of the Sun hoped
the old man would be dead before he re
sited the huts: he was said to be fast
proaching to dissolution.

The female chief, who expected the l
of her rival, apparently left Ondouré in c
parative repose, but she watched all
actions with the quickness of jealousy:
the Savage, dreading always to betray h
self, escaped the danger only by mean
precautions of which he longed to free h
self.

On the other hand, it was difficult to
vent the secret of a conspiracy, which

known to so many, from transpiring. From time to time, reports were circulated which would have induced any governor less infatuated than the commandant of Fort Rosalie, to investigate their source. The governor-general had written to Chepar not to rest altogether satisfied with the cession of the lands. A letter from Adelaide, addressed to René, having been found among the dispatches, Ondouré, whom Febriano informed of every thing, hastened to announce a new instance of treason on the part of the adopted son of Chactas; but at the same time, in order to complete the deception of the commandant, and to have the appearance of being only occupied by his pleasures, he commanded a buffalo-hunt on the other side of the Meschacebé.

Mila no sooner heard the news than she said to Celuta: "We must go to this chase, where all the matrons are to assemble. I will make the conjuror this very day tell

me the secret." Celuta sadly consented to accompany Mila; though she doubted the success of her young friend, who refused to acquaint her with the means she intended to adopt, in order to force the juggler to communicate the secret.

The day of the chase arrived. The two sisters departed together to join the hunters. They walked alone apart from the crowd; for all shunned them as the unhappy are always shunned. The people embarked in the canoes; they crossed the river, and on the other side entered those savannahs intersected with streams of a brackish taste, where the buffaloes come to lick the salt.

The hunters, divided into three bands, commenced the attack; and the buffaloes leaped over great forests of canes more than fifteen feet high. Mila had quitted Celuta, and had followed the steps of the conjuror, who muttered the words that were to bring the buffaloes beneath the lance of

the hunters. A wounded buffalo suddenly fell upon the magician, who fled. The animal was stopped in his career by the hunters, but the magician continued to shelter himself among the canes, and hearing footsteps behind him, he fled yet faster; but it was only Mila, who followed his course as the snakes twine round the reeds. She called the juggler, who at last turning round and seeing a woman, sunk to the earth breathless.

"I assure you," said Mila, "that I am as much frightened as you. I followed you because you could have saved me. With a single word you could have laid the buffalo dead at your feet." "It is true," said the juggler, resuming an air of solemnity: "but how thirsty I am!"

Mila had on her arm a basket, in which were a flask and a cup.

"The Great Spirit has inspired me well," cried Mila; "I have by chance here, some

essence of fire.* Alas, good genius! if a man like thee were to die, what would become of the Natchez?"

"Mila," said the conjuror, wiping his brow, and approaching the malicious enchantress, "I always thought thou hadst the cunning of an ermine."

"And thou," said Mila, pouring essence of fire into the cup, "hast always appeared to me beautiful as the Spirit who presides over the chase, like the Great Hare honoured in the forests." The priest emptied the cup.

The savages, who are passionately fond of European liquors, seek the fumes of drunkenness as eagerly as the people of the east do the vapours of opium. "I have never yet seen thee so near me," said Mila, again filling the cup, and presenting it to the eager hand of the juggler; "how beautiful, how very beautiful thou art! they say thou speak-

* Brandy.

est many tongues. Dost thou understand all that thou sayest?"

Trebly intoxicated by wine, love, and praise, the priest began to speak with his eyes. Mila again filled the cup, and raised it with her right hand to the lips of the juggler, while her left was softly placed on his shoulder as she feigned to regard with admiration her victim already seduced.

The spot was solitary; the reeds were high. "Mila," said the juggler.

"What wouldst thou?" said the Indian, affecting an air of mingled trouble and shame.

"Approach;" replied the priest. Mila seemed to hesitate.

"Fear not," said the juggler. "I have power to spread night around us."

"It is for that very reason I fear," replied Mila. "Thou art so great a magician." The priest then seizing Mila in his arms, drew her to him, and placed her on

his knees. "Drink in thy turn, charming Dove," said he.

"I!" cried Mila; and she feigned to lift the liquor to her lips, while the priest, turning the cup, endeavoured to drink from that part of the rim which her lips had touched.

The juggler now began to feel the effects of the poison; the objects round him grew dim.

"See I not," said he to Mila, "a large hut?" They were reeds waved by the wind.

"Yes," said Mila, "that is the hut where the Sachems are assembled to decide on the death of René."

"That is strange," said the priest, stammering, "for the time is not yet come."

The heart of Mila thrilled; involuntarily she pressed the juggler in her arms; he returned her embrace.

"Not yet," said Mila; "but....."

"The twelfth night of the moon of hunting, perhaps."

"I thought," said Mila, "that it was the thirteenth."

"I know better than thou," replied the juggler; "there are twelve reeds in the sheaf, we draw one out nightly."

"An excellent plan," said Mila: and René is to be slain when the last is withdrawn?"

"Yes," said the priest; "he is to fall the first."

The priest now would have ravished a kiss from Mila, who, instead of her lips, presented him again with the essence of fire. "I would rather chuse the other cup," said the juggler.

"But," continued Mila, "thou sayest that René is the first to be slain: there will then fall more white flesh?"—"Yea," said the juggler, smiling at the simplicity of Mila; "and the plan is the better arranged, as they will all be assembled, like a herd of deer, to look upon the grand festival."

"Oh how I shall dance there with thee,"

cried Mila, kissing, with natural disgust, but all the exaltation of friendship, the forehead of the juggler. "I did not hear of those grand festivals—I love festivals so much!"

"All the nations that have sworn secrecy," said the juggler, "are to repair to Natchez. Outougamiz the simple has sworn like the others: we will force him to slay his friend René."

Mila rose, and sprung from the arms of the priest, who fell, and his forehead struck the ground. He had a confused idea of the mistake which he had committed; but drunkenness overcame him and he fell asleep.

Mila looked about for Celuta, and, perceiving her sitting alone, she said to her: "All is discovered: the Whites are to be massacred at the grand festival—thy husband is to perish the first."

The spouse of René was about to faint, but her friend supported her. "Courage," said she, "we must save René. I fly to the

fort to alarm Chepar, while thou goest to seek Outougamiz."

"Stop!" cried Celuta: "what sayest thou? Alarm Chepar! Think of thy country!"

These words struck upon the heart of Mila: she stood motionless, and, fixing her eyes upon her sister, cried out: "Perish the country which could ever have formed a conspiracy so odious! It is but a den of assassins. I fly to denounce them."

Celuta trembled. "Mila," said she, think of thy mother, thy father, of myself, of Outougamiz. Seest thou not that in preventing a massacre, thou only dost produce murders far more terrible for thyself."

Mila trembled: she had not considered this farther peril; but suddenly she said: "I did not expect when the life of René was at stake, to find you so calm, and balancing prudently, like a Sachem, the good and the evil."

"Woman," replied Celuta with emotion, "of whatever nature thy heart may be, thou wilt never learn to love; but think not to deceive me. I am now as unhappy as my brother, and I shall bear myself as well as he. I know how to die of grief; but I know not how to deliver up my country."

Mila embraced Celuta. "Pardon me," said she: "I am too far beneath thee to be able to judge of thy motives or actions."

Mila now told her sister how she had stolen the secret of the juggler. Celuta gently blamed her friend. "It is never right to use wrong means," said she, "were it only the torment of the secret which thou hast learned, a secret for which thou art now answerable to thy country, wouldst thou not already be sufficiently punished?"

Mila and Celuta now determined to search for Outougamiz. They found him on the banks of the river far from the hunt, in which he had taken no part. On seeing the two

women approach, Outougamiz, for the first time, felt tempted to withdraw. What could he say to them? Was he not as unhappy as they? Celuta said to him as they advanced: "Fly us not; we ask nothing farther of thee; we know thy misfortunes. Brother, I accuse thee no longer; I admire thee. Thou art the Genius of Virtue as well as of Friendship." Outougamiz understood not his sister.

"Let us all three weep," said Mila, "we all know the secret."

"You know the secret!" cried the young Indian in a terrible voice. "Who has told you? 'Twas not I. I have not lied to the Great Spirit! I have not violated my oath before the dead! I have not slain my country!" And, full of the fear of perjury, he escaped from the very arms in which he would have wished to die. Mila fled after him, but could not overtake him. Celuta, now left alone, entered a canoe with some hunters who were crossing the river, and regained her hut.

A friend who disappears at the moment of danger leaves a frightful void. Celuta called on her sister's name as she approached her dwelling; but no voice replied. Mila had not returned to the house of her sister. Celuta entered the hut; she searched the various rooms, returned to the door, looked out into the fields, yet saw no one. Overpowered with fatigue, she sat down near the hearth, holding her child in her arms. Then, yielding to her thoughts, she felt even less overwhelmed by the perils of the moment than by the letter of René. The sister of Outougamiz was not—never would be loved! And it was he whom she adored, he whom she wished to save at the price of her own life, who had made her this barbarous avowal! Celuta felt as if she was suddenly cast out of existence; she felt that she was to bury herself in solitude, like the mysterious being who had too much loved René.

The maukawees sung sunset, the sweet

scented pea of Virginia began to blow at the approach of night, the cry of the stork announced its close, yet the friend of Celuta came not. The dawn opened the gates of heaven without bringing with it the nymph who was its faithful companion. Crowned with flowers, Mila was wont to appear every morning like the youngest of the Hours; and, preceding the steps of Aurora, she seemed to give or take from her the charms and the freshness that adorned her.

When Celuta saw day dawn, her alarm increased. What could have become of her sister? One thought occurred to the daughter of Tabamica. While living with Celuta, Mila did not inhabit her proper home; her cabin was that of Outougamiz. Was it not possible that Outougamiz might have returned to his own hearth, and that his spouse had returned thither with him?

Celuta passed round her neck a scarf, to which a light cradle was suspended; and in

this she placed the infant traveller, who smiled over the shoulder of her mother. She left her hut, and soon arrived at the cabin which recalled to her memory both sweet and bitter recollections. It was there that she dwelt with Outougamiz when René came to visit her; it was through the half-opened door of that hut that she saw the stranger among the thicket of azalea. How her heart had throbbed when the white warrior seated himself by her side! With what delight had she prepared the feast of the vow of friendship! Vanished were now those days that had produced an affection so tender! Sweet enchantments of the heart, hopes of a happiness eternal and immeasurable, what were ye become? Cabin, that didst protect the youth of Outougamiz and Celuta, hast thou too changed like thy masters? hast thou grown older like them?

Yes, that cabin is no longer the same: long uninhabited, it was empty and without

its tutelary genii: little birds built their nests there, and the grass grew around it.

Encircled by assassins, abandoned by her friends, given up defenceless to the impure love of the guardian of the Sun, and overwhelmed with the misfortunes and the indifference of René, Celuta wished only for a grave, where she might for ever repose. As she quitted the hut, where she had found no one, she perceived Adario, who was walking slowly, supported on the arm of Outougamis: and she was struck with terror to see that Mila was not with them. The old man was bowed down to the earth: the weight of paternal grief had at last bent his inflexible forehead: Adario was now but a dead man, permitted for a few days to remain among the living, to revenge himself.

Celuta advanced towards him. "Art thou here, my daughter," said he, in a voice full of unwonted mildness, "I was going to thy hut; but since we are near thy brother's dwell-

ing, let us there stop. The aged hunter begins to feel the way too long: he rests himself wherever he can find shelter."

Touched by the change in the old man, and melted by his tone of kindness, Celuta entered the deserted hut with her brother and uncle. They were obliged to sit upon the wet ground: "This," said Adario, "is my daily couch: I must accustom myself to the earth."

Hesitating, for the first time in his life, the Sachem appeared to have to gather his thoughts together and to select his words. Outougamiz, recovering as from a dream, and recognizing the place where he sat, said, shaking his head, "Adario, thou hast not done wisely in bringing me hither. Thou wishest that I should slay René, and it is on this very spot that I swore to him an eternal friendship. I have since sworn, it is true, that I will kill him: but tell me to which of

these two oaths should I be faithful? Is it not to the first?"

"Thou hast vowed thy last vow to thy country," replied Adario, "and upon the bones of thy ancestors!

"Upon bones brought by the juggler," replied Outougamiz, "but were they those of my ancestors? I wished to know the truth, and I went last night to the tomb of my father. I lay down upon the grass: I listened: my father was in his grave, for I heard him scratching with his hands to get to me. The dust which lay between us was not thicker than a plantain leaf. I felt my bosom grow chill as the heart of the dead man approached mine: it communicated its coldness to me. I was calm and happy: I felt as if in sleep."

"Madman!" cried Adario, "thy friendship distracts thee."

"Never pronounce that word, Adario," cried Outougamiz, "thou knowest nothing

of friendship. If thou wouldst even call my father to witness against me, it would be in vain: for he received in this very cabin my oath of friendship, as well as that woman whom thou dost not deign to look on, and who weeps .... I behold René: he comes to reclaim on this very spot, the fulfilment of my vow. The Manitou of gold trembles upon my bosom: no, my friend! no, my brother! I will not violate my oath! Come near, that I may renew it to thee and to my sister: I swear ...."

"Impious man!" cried Adario, placing his withered hand upon his mouth; "dread lest the earth devour thee, as the waves have swallowed Mila."

"Mila!" at once exclaimed the brother and sister.

"Yes, Mila:" repeated Adario, in a voice of inspiration; "she knew the secret and has perished!"

Outougamiz stood petrified: Celuta moist-

ened the ground with her tears. Adario, with one arm lifted between his nephew and niece, seemed ready again to pronounce the word which had annihilated them—"She has perished!"

Outougamiz rose, and taking his sister by the hand, raised her up, and after looking at her for some time in silence he thus spoke: "He will be no longer beloved. René! the only heart which still loved thee, the only one that wished to save thee; the only one that still protested thy innocence, has ceased to beat; for my sister and I doubt; we are feeble; we can neither decide for our country nor friendship. Celuta, I have lost my wife, thou hast lost thy friend, she who followed thee from the city of the Whites, who took care of thee in my absence and sustained thee in the absence of him whom they wish to slay. Mila, dead! René, dead! and his little daughter too will soon die!

Chactas also is dying. Celuta, shall we then be left alone?"

Celuta could not reply. Outougamiz turned towards Adario, who was still seated on the ground. He raised his tomahawk and cried, "Who hath slain Mila?"

"Athaënsic," replied Adario, coldly, "the Spirit of evil, hath seized her; she has thrown herself into the river."

"If I knew," replied the young savage, muttering the words between his clenched teeth, "that any man had laid his hand upon Mila, were he my own father . . . . . I would go and join Chepar, and put myself at the head of the white men."

Adario rose indignant, and shaking his vestments, cried, "I fancied, wretch, that thou only soughtest to bring down my white hairs: and these I would joyfully deliver into thy hands to engage thee to keep thy faith and to save thy country. I said to myself, he re-

quires a libation of blood to satisfy his first oath. Let him draw it from my veins! But that even the shadow of a thought injurious to thy country should have entered thy cowardly heart! ... Away, wretch! I go to deliver thee to the Sachems who would slay thee and thy sister, when they have learnt the indiscretion of the priest. I had sworn for thy virtue; for that I had engaged myself: I was going to demand of Celuta an oath of secrecy; but ye are both traitors, and I abandon you."

Adario was about to withdraw, when Celuta stopped him. "Despair of me," cried she, "but never of Outougamiz."

"And why," replied her brother, "wouldst thou have him hope any thing for me? No, I will save my friend if I am not prevented by death."

"Go," cried Adario, "faithful spouse, generous friend, reveal the secret to René: then, go and deliver up your country to strangers: but remember, worthy pair, that

before that victory is achieved, our huts must be burned, your relatives and your friends must be butchered, and the hairs must have been plucked one by one from the scalp of Adario, that a festive cup may be made of his scull for René."

During this frightful speech, Celuta and Outougamiz looked like two spectres. Adario drew near his niece. "My Celuta," said he, "must Adario kneel at thy feet? speak, and thou shalt see at thy feet him who never bent before man. My child, René must one day die, because he is mortal: but thy country, if thou wilt, thy country may be immortal. Has not thy cousin, my poor daughter, lost her only son, and knowest thou not by whose hand? Have not I torn up my posterity as it were by the roots, lest they should transplant themselves into a soil of slavery? Look on me, and say that thou thinkest this has cost me nothing? Say, if my torn bowels no longer bleed, if the wound I have myself

inflicted is yet healed? If there yet remain free men among the Natchez, it will be to thee, Celuta, that they will owe their liberty: they will smile upon thee even from the arms of their mother: blessings will follow thee when thou shalt traverse the villages of thy country: the Sachems will range themselves respectfully along thy path, as they cry, "Make way for Celuta!" Their flourishing harvests will all be owing to thee: those shouts of joy and love thy conduct will have caused. What is the sacrifice of a passion which time must at last extinguish, compared to the pleasures which spring from the greatest of the virtues? Canst thou hesitate? Canst thou consent to be but an ordinary woman in thy love, and a criminal one in thy conduct, when thou mayest give an example to the universe?"

Outougamiz had listened in gloomy silence: Celuta seemed suspended between life and death. "What wouldst thou have me

do?" asked she, in a trembling voice. "Take the oath of secrecy to which thy brother has sworn: swear before me to keep the secret: that thou wilt never reveal it to one who would divulge it, to a man whose love even thou hast not, and who would betray thee, as he has betrayed thy country."

These words sunk deep into the heart of Celuta: but the noble being rising above her misfortunes, replied, "Why shouldst thou imagine that I possess not the heart of my husband? thinkest thou by that to determine me to sacrifice him to my unrequited affection? If René loves me not, it is because I am not worthy of him: it is a fresh reason for saving him, and meriting his love by devoting myself for him."

She paused: for the tears which she had till then restrained, but which were internally flowing, now stopped her utterance: "Adario," said she, "thou art ungrateful: René,

in the city of the Whites, offered his own head for thine."

"Believe it not," said Adario, interrupting her: "that farce was arranged among our enemies, in order to inspire us with the more confidence in a traitor."

"Unfortunate René," cried Celuta, "some evil Spirit makes even thy virtues turn against thee!"

"Celuta," said Adario, "the time presses. The festival is about to be proclaimed: art thou friend or foe? Declare thyself: join the Whites, or swear to keep our secret."

The sister of Outougamiz looked around: she thought she heard lamenting voices issuing from the shades of death: the daughter of René was moaning in her cradle. After a few moments of silence, Celuta said, "Hear my resolution." Adario and Outougamiz listened.

"My brother may have sworn not knowing to what his vow bound him: but I who know

beforehand the consequences of that oath, should be an unnatural woman if I uttered it, I will not then swear: but to console thee, Adario, know that if my virtue does not compel me to keep the secret, all the torments in the world would be in vain."

As she pronounced these words, Celuta seemed transfigured and radiant. "It is enough," cried Adario, pressing her hand to his heart. "I am satisfied, and the Sachems will be so too. The vow thou hast just made is far more binding than that which I demanded of thee."

Adario returned to the council of the Sachems, and Outougamiz again lent to the old man the support of his arm. Celuta returned towards the hut of René: her mind was like an abyss in which all kinds of griefs tossed about in confusion.

The most recent of her wounds gradually became the most painful: when the spouse of René, descending to the depths of her

heart, began to examine the chaos of her sufferings, that which had occasioned her the loss of Mila was most cruelly felt. Celuta figured to herself all that her sister had been to her —her inexhaustible gaiety mingled with such depth of feeling! The birds of the air sung less sweetly than Mila, and she loved more. Even the pain which she gave was so mingled with pleasure, and the pleasure so unmixed with pain! Those charming locks were now stained with the mud of the river—the mouth which Love himself seemed half to open, was now filled with sand! The woman who was all soul but a few hours ago—she whom life animated with all its mobility, was now cold, and fixed for ever in the embraces of death! How soon had the tender friend, who lived only for her friends, been forgotten! Her family already thought of her no longer; Outougamiz himself had been taken away, and there was no one to render the funeral ho-

nours to the young, the innocent, and courageous Mila.

These reflections, to which Celuta abandoned herself as she returned to her hut, led her to change her road, and she walked towards the river, to seek there for the corpse of her friend. Celuta had unjustly accused her brother: Outougamiz had not forgotten Mila. After accompanying Adario he went down to the bank of the Meschacebé: he first looked at the current, and then wandered along the shore, eagerly regarding each object which the stream drove along: he fancied he heard a murmur, and he cried: "Dost thou speak to me, Mila? art thou now a light wave, or a breeze dwelling among the reeds? or playest thou as a fish of azure and gold, among forests of coral? Dost thou, like a swift swallow, trace many circles on thesur face of the river? Whether under a robe of feathers, scales, or crystal, thy heart still loves and laments René."

A young magnolia which the Meschacebé had encircled in its last inundation, fixed for a long time the attention of Outougamiz; he seemed to be looking at Mila standing erect in the wave.

Outougamiz sat down upon the bank: "Why, Mila," said he, "dost thou not reply to me, thou who spakest so well? When thou didst weep over René, thine eyes were like two pearls at the bottom of a spring; thy bosom, wet with tears, was like the white down of the rush on which the wind has scattered some drops of water. Thou didst stand me instead of talents: now that I am alone, I shall never be able to deliver my friend from the Sachems: and then thou wert so certain of his innocence!"

Mila, before her disappearance, had remarked to her brother and sister that they were seeking for extraordinary means to save René, while there was a method perfectly simple, of which they had never thought: this was to go

to the white warrior, and to keep him from the Natchez as many days as might be requisite to deliver him from his danger. Mila added, that if René resisted, they should bind him to the trunk of a tree; for she could not help mingling the plans of a child with the inspirations of love and the counsels of premature wisdom. Outougamiz, as he stood on the brink of the river, remembered the last suggestion of Mila. "You were right," cried he. He threw from him every thing that could retard the rapidity of his course, and deceiving the vigilance of the Allouez,* who followed him, he flew like an arrow thrown by the arm of the hunter.

He had scarcely quitted the bank when Celuta appeared. She paused at every step to look among the reeds—walked to the extreme edge of promontories, and sought as for a treasure for the remains of her young friend: but she found nothing. "The Mes-

* Officers of a certain jurisdiction.

chacebé is also against us," said she: and she returned to the hut, exhausted with fatigue and grief.

On recovering from his intoxication the juggler had a confused feeling of his indiscretion, and he flew to make an avowal of it to the guardian of the Sun. Ondouré, after breaking out into wrath against the priest, hastened to re-assemble the council. He declared that it was highly probable that Mila, when informed of the secret, had communicated it to Celuta: and announced at the same time to the Sachems, that there now remained nothing farther to be dreaded from Mila, as she no longer existed. Adario opposed all extreme proceedings against his niece, and promised to obtain from her an oath which she should observe as religiously as Outougamiz. The old men yielded to the wishes of Adario: but it was decided that if the brother or sister allowed the slightest hint

to escape, they should be immolated to the general safety.

The immediate death of René was then put to the vote, in case he returned before the day of the massacre: but Adario observed, that if this traitor were singly punished, it would alarm the Whites, his accomplices; that they should all be thereby exposed to the effects of the despair of Outougamiz and Celuta, which might greatly injure the general execution of the plot. It was therefore judged more prudent to leave things at present as they were, and not to take any active steps whatever.

The only thing wanting to the success of the plans of Ondouré was the death of Chactas: and the various messengers began to spread the news of that irreparable loss. As to the profanation of Celuta in the arms of a monster, Ondouré reckoned himself already sure of his prey. Those complicated springs, those crooked plans; that double intrigue in

the council of the Natchez and in the council of Fort Rosalie; that plot so laboriously constructed and yet so fragile—had all been conceived and conducted by Ondouré, in order to satisfy a criminal passion, and to attain, by the triumph of his love, to the highest step of ambition. But the very excess of his pride and joy was on the point of destroying Ondouré: he could not help proceeding to insult his victim. Delivered from the fear of Mila's presence, he ventured into the sacred solitude of Celuta, and dared to utter words of tenderness to the most unhappy of women, almost all whose misfortunes were caused by himself. Ondouré forgot that jealousy numbered his steps, and that he might be punished by the very passion which had been the source of all his crimes.

The heralds now went about publishing the festival, and its duration, which was to extend to twelve days. Every thing was in motion among the Natchez and in the colony: for the

French, eager after pleasure even amid the woods, promised to be present at a festival so fatal to themselves. The commandant, who was invited, now regarding the Natchez as the subjects of the king of France, granted all his protection to the national ceremony. He had several times received salutary warnings, but Febriano and the other creatures of Ondouré kept Chepar in his ignorance and blindness: even the festival contributed to make him secure. "Men who are conspiring," said he, "don't play with balls and bones."* There is a certain sort of vulgar good sense which deludes common minds.

From all parts joyous groups assembled, and they sung, laughed, and danced in anticipation of the games. The Chickasaws, Yazous, and

* The bones here alluded to, are the small joints taken from the legs of sheep with which children play in France, and savages in America. The lower orders of Spaniards have also a game which they play at with the same bones. See the Novel of *Sandoval, or the Spanish Freemason*, lately published. *Translator.*

Miamis, and all those who had joined in the plot, arrived at the great village. Here was encamped a family, of which the women, loaded with the baggage, were engaged in placing it on the ground, or hanging to the trees their infants' cradles: there Indians were lighting fires in their tents and preparing their repast. Farther off travellers were seen bathing their feet in a stream, or reclining upon the grass. At the extremity of a wood appeared a tribe, which advanced, covered with dust, in line of march: the birds were flying away, and the deer were scudding, or standing at gaze on the hills to look on that assembly of men. The colonists quitted their habitations, and came to see the preparation for the games: they knew not what crown was promised to the conquerors.

The sheaf of reeds had been deposited in the temple of Athaënsic, under the altar of that Spirit of Vengeance. A juggler watched it. The first reed was to be withdrawn by

three sorceresses on the night following the opening of the games; and in every place where European colonies were established, the same ceremony was to take place.

A ray of hope gleamed on the soul of Celuta. René arrived not: fourteen days more, and he would escape his fate. Had any accident retarded his arrival? Had he met Outougamiz? for Celuta doubted not that her brother who had been seen in the woods, had flown to the succour of his friend. She indulged a moment in those dreams of happiness which pursue us even into the bosom of misfortune, forgetting both the dangers which each hour might bring to herself, and the wrongs she had to complain of from René: in thought she raised herself to the abode of angels while her feet were upon the earth, as the palm-tree rejoices in the dew of heaven, while its root is fixed in the arid sand.

The hopes of Celuta would have been fears

to. Ondouré, had he not known that the brother of Amelia was returning after having failed in his negociations, and thus rendered the author of the war with the Illinois more suspected than ever among the Natchez. Ondouré moreover knew that Outougamiz had not met with René; the Allouez dispatched after the young savage left nothing respecting him unknown to the guardian of the Sun. The report of the approaching return of René very speedily spread to the great village: and while it dissipated the last illusions of Celuta, overwhelmed a woman, already too unfortunate with grief.

The day of the games at last arrived. At a little distance from the great village lay a valley altogether surrounded by wood, which grew like an amphitheatre on the heights, and formed a natural wall to a beautiful hall built by the hands of nature: there were the sports to be held: the game at ball, and

afterwards that with bones. The festival began at sun-rise.

The high-priest advanced at the head of the players, holding in his hand a staff painted blue, and adorned with streamers of rushes and feathers: the jugglers, crowned with ivy, followed the high-priest. After these came Ondouré leading his ward the young Sun, eight years old: the female chief, with pale visage, accompanied her son. Behind her, two and two, came old men from the Chickasaws, the Yazous, and other allies. A numerous band of musicians, with fifes, shells, and tambourines, escorted the Sachems. The young warriors, half naked and armed with rackets, pressed in confusion after their parents. An immense crowd, composed of children, women, colonists, soldiers, and negroes, filled the interior of the amphitheatre. Chepar himself was present, attended by his officers. Every hut was deserted: the hearth of René alone was tenanted by grief.

As soon as the players were in the arena, the high-priest clapped his hands, and the hymn of the games was sung in chorus. The first acclamation bursting from five or six united nations was overpowering: Celuta heard it from her solitary hut: it seemed like the voice of death crying to the brother of Amelia.

CHORUS.

"Is it the wing of the bird which cuts the air? Is it an arrow which whizzes by mine ear? No, it is the ball which flies before the racket. O mine eye, follow the ball, or I will pull thee out. What would the racket say were she left widow of the ball which she loves?"

THE YOUNG WARRIORS.

"Let us borrow the feet of the stag to marry the racket to the ball."

A PRIEST.

"Women were first born with half their graces. One day the Genius of Love was playing at ball in the forests of heaven: the ball struck the bosom of the youngest of his spouses, and, burst by the blow, the globe transformed itself into the double bosom, of the final charm which is produced by the first born."

A WARRIOR.

"The game of the ball is manly and noble, but who will sing the game of bones? It is by the bones that riches are gained—that we obtain a tender spouse."

THE SACHEMS.

"It is at the bones that men lose their reason—that they sell their liberty."

THE JUGGLERS.

"Our destinies are divided into two parts: one is good—the other evil. The Great Spirit put the first into a white bone, the second into a black one. Each being, when born, and before his eyes are opened, takes his bone from the hand of the Great Spirit."

THE SACHEMS.

"What matters it if the bones of our destiny be white or black? We play in this world seated on a grave: and scarcely have we drawn our bone, whether fatal or fortunate, when Death, who marks the game, summons us."

The players divided themselves into two bands: the Natchez were on one side and the Chickasaws on the other. On a given signal, the most adroit of the Natchez warriors, placed at his post, struck the ball with

his racket, which flew through the air as the bullet springs from the fiery tube of the hunter: a Chickasaw caught it and returned it with the same rapidity. It was sent back and caught again. A general movement now took place; the ball bounded and rebounded from side to side: sometimes it flew horizontally, and you might have seen the players bend down by turns, like corn when a breeze passes over it: sometimes it seemed lost in the heavens: then all eyes were upturned to discover its traces, all hands uplifted to catch it in its fall. Suddenly the warriors would separate, group themselves, mix, disperse, and again re-assemble: the ball would make short leaps from racket to racket, till some vigorous arm, disengaging it from the conflict, would make it bound into the midst of the arena. The shouts of hope or fear, of laughter and applause, the noise of footsteps, the hissing of the ball, the blows of the rackets,

the voices of the markers, and the snorting of the conchs, made the woods echo again.

Amidst all this bustle and noise, the minds of those present were differently occupied: the French enjoyed in profound security the animated spectacle, while the conspirators numbered their victims. There was something fearful in those sports which were to conceal the intended massacre of a colony. How many men have taken for a festival the day which was to be to them the messenger of death!

The games were suspended during an entertainment, which was served in the shade by the side of a running stream: they then recommenced: it was not yet certain to which side would incline the victory, the prize of which was a thousand skins of wild beasts. Suddenly the spectacle was interrupted: the Sachems rose, the crowd rushed towards a hill to the North, and these words were heard—"Behold our father—behold Chactas? Alas,

he is dying! Outougamiz comes to announce his arrival!"

Outougamiz, who had not rejoined René, had met the Sachem, who was borne along by a troop of young Cherokees. The reputation of Chactas was such, that the French commandant himself followed the multitude to meet the old man. The crowd shouted affectionately as the venerable man passed by: but their eyes were wet with tears when they saw that Chactas had but a few hours to live: his face, though serene as ever, announced extreme fatigue and decrepitude, and his voice was so weak that it could scarcely be heard. Nevertheless the Sachem replied with his wonted goodness and calm air to all those who addressed him. A young warrior remarked that the silver hair of the aged man had grown still whiter. "True, my son," replied Chactas, "I have assumed my winter attire, and I am about to shut myself up in my cave." A Sachem of Ondouré's

party spoke to him of the games and of the peace: he replied, "The waters are quiet above the cataract; they are only turbid below."

Outougamiz, who walked beside the bed of leaves on which the Cherokees bore Chactas, suddenly broke out into a transport of joy from amid the depths of an agony in which he had till then been plunged. "Ah!" said he aloud, "thus it was that I saw René borne when I loved him, and would not slay him—before Mila had quitted me for ever."

These two names caught the ear of Chactas. "My dear Outougamiz," said he, "thou speakest of René and Mila: but where is Celuta? where are my dear children, that I may embrace them before I die?"

"Protecting oak," cried Outougamiz, "we are all about to put ourselves under thy shadow, except Mila, who hath made her bed in the waters." "Heroic and excellent young man," said Chactas, "I dread lest the

oak may fall before it can screen thee from the storm." Chactas then asked where Adario lived, and was told that he dwelt in the forests.

Ondouré experienced the utmost disquietude at this triumph of virtue. The unexpected arrival of Chactas, together with the prolongation of his life, seemed completely to confound the projects of the traitor. He feared lest the Sachem should discover his plots, and that a private conversation, even but for a moment, with Celuta and Outougamiz, might destroy the labours of two years. In his wish to separate Outougamiz and Chactas, Ondouré had the imprudence to approach the couch of the old man to entreat that he would take some repose. Chactas recognizing the voice, said,

"O falsest of men! hast thou not yet learnt to blush?"

"Well spoken, Chactas," cried Outougamiz, "thou speakest like Mila!" Ondouré

stammered, and seemed to have lost his usual effrontery.

"My children," said Chactas, raising his voice as he addressed the crowd, the hum of which he heard around him, though he saw them not, "that is one of the greatest villains the earth has ever produced. It is our weakness that gives strength to his tyranny; it is long since I guessed the secrets of the traitor."

This violent language from the lips of an old man so wise and so calm, produced an extraordinary effect. Ondouré gave himself up for lost. Outougamiz encouraged the tumult: "Go, seek Celuta," he cried: all is settled—René is saved! I shall not now slay him! What a pity that Mila is dead!"

Several Sachems who had remained faithful to Chactas said that Ondouré was in all probability the murderer of the old Sun; that he had seduced the female chief: that he had seized the government by violence, and

even at that moment meditated other crimes. The Savages of the other tribes appeared troubled: and the French commandant began to be surprised at this new indication of a conspiracy. The destiny of Ondouré seemed to hang but on a thread, when the priests and Sachems of the traitor's party repeated the story of the spell which a white magician had cast over Outougamiz and the venerable Chactas. The religious absurdities previously practised in similar cases had their usual effect: the superstitious crowd believed in these rather than in the truth. Chactas was borne to his hut. Chepar returned to the fort, anew disposed by Febriano to confide in Ondouré, and to suspect the brother of Amelia. The sun was now set, and the Savages delayed till next day the continuation of the games.

But the storm, though stilled for a moment, threatened to burst forth anew. Chactas was scarcely deposited in the hut, when he re-

quired the convocation of a council, that he might converse with the Sachems before he expired. It was impossible for the conspirators to refuse this last wish of the illustrious old man, without rendering themselves suspected by and odious to the nation. Ondouré hastened to seek Adario, and spoke to him of Chactas, whose mind he said was disturbed by the approach of death. Adario, contemptuously regarding the Savage, said, "It suits thee well, miserable warrior, thus to speak of the greatest of the Sachems and the friend of Adario! Hasten out of my sight if thou wouldst not have me punish thy foolish words."

Ondouré was in despair between the two old men: Chactas knew not the traitor's designs, and would have overthrown them if he had known them: Adario despised the guardian of the Sun, and would have stabbed him, had he imagined that in the massacre of the Whites he aspired to absolute power. The Sachems hastened to hold a

council in the hut of Chactas: Adario was there the first.

Outougamiz had gone to seek his sister. Seated by her solitary hearth, and searching the recesses of her heart, Celuta had reviewed all her griefs, one after another: her daughter, Mila, Outougamiz, René, had all by turns presented themselves to her fears and regrets: it was for herself alone that she forgot to mourn. Great griefs, like great joys, shorten the time; and tears that flow in abundance, carry the hours rapidly along in their course. Celuta knew nothing of the interruption of the games, the return of her brother, or the arrival of Chactas. Outougamiz rushed into the hut exclaiming:

"I am here! he is come! Chactas, Chactas himself! I found him instead of René, he is arrived! We shall all be saved now! Ah, were Mila but alive! she was in too great a hurry! Take thy mantle and thy child,

and let us go to visit Chactas! He may by this time be dead, but still we are saved!"

On hearing these words, which to any one but Celuta would have been unintelligible, the Indian raised her heart to the Great Spirit, and hastened to take her mantle. Outougamiz urged her to be speedy, and in attempting to aid her, caused only delay. When the brother and sister left the hut, night had reached the middle of its course. At that very moment the three old women attached to the worship of Athaënsic entered the temple, and, in the presence of the chief priest, burnt one of the rushes: it seemed as if the Fates were cutting the first thread of René's existence.

Outougamiz and Celuta arrived at the hut of Chactas: the council was still sitting, and the Allouez placed around forbade them to advance. It was never known what took place in this council, assembled by the dying bed of Chactas, and presided over by virtue

which was leaving the earth. The guards nearest the door could only catch a few words, when the voices rose as the discussion became animated. Once Chactas said to Adario:

"I think I love my country as well as thou dost, but I love it less than virtue."

A short time afterwards he said: "I know not what are your intentions: but he who is obliged to conceal his actions does what is not agreeable to the Great Spirit."

Afterwards the female chief was heard to speak in an impassioned tone, but her words could not be distinguished. Chactas spoke after her:

"Ye see that this woman is a prey to remorse; she tells not all, but her conscience smites her. Why is her accomplice, the infamous Ondouré, absent?"

To some remark that had doubtless been made, Chactas rejoined:

"I know it: the young warriors will prefer the counsels of Adario to mine. Youth

loves better those fierce fires which oblige it to recoil, and which are felt even at a great distance; disdaining the dying embers which must be closely approached in order that the fading heat may be felt."

Adario said something.

"My old friend," rejoined Chactas, "we have travelled a long way together. I love, and will wait for you. Do not calumniate René: only pardon his excess of goodness, and believe that neither you nor I are better than he."

Here some confusion seemed to arise in the assembly; the Sachems spoke all at once, but the voice of Chactas soon restored silence, as he said:

"What do I hear? Has there been an assembly of the Natchez on the Rock of the Lake? Has Mila thrown herself into the river? René is absent, and accused without being allowed to defend himself! Celuta is plunged in grief! Outougamiz seems mad!

Akansie repents! The games that have been proclaimed seem to cover some dreadful resolution! I have been removed, and my return spreads confusion among you!.... Great Spirit, thou summonest me to thyself before I can penetrate all these mysteries! thy will be done! take into thy powerful hands what my weaker ones cannot perform! Farewell, my dear country! I owe to my soul the last moments which remain to me. Here end between men and me the scenes of life. Sachems, you allow me to depart in ignorance of your secrets: I am about to learn those of Eternity."

After these words nothing was heard. The Sachems soon after came forth from the hut, with downcast and tearful eyes; thus do ancient oaks drop from their faded leaves the dew which has fallen on them during the night. The dawn began to tinge the sky when the female chief summoned the guardian of the Sun.

Outougamiz and Celuta then entered the hut of Chactas. The old man was at that moment in a fainting fit. He had entreated before his strength failed him that he might be borne to the foot of a tree with his face turned to the east, and that thus he might be allowed to die. When he recovered his senses, he recognized Outougamiz and Celuta by their voices, but he could not speak to them.

Adario had not left the hut with the other Sachems; he had remained there to execute the last wishes of his friend. Chactas was placed under a tulip-tree planted on the summit of an eminence, from whence were seen the river and the whole extent of the desert.

The morning rose, and, as the earth accomplished its revolution from west to east, there were painted on the horizon zones of purple and rose-colour, like magnificent ribands unrolled from their cylinders. From the bosom of the woods ascended the morning vapours, which changed into a golden mist as

they rose to those regions which were illumined by the sun. The mocking-birds sung; the colibris fluttered on the stems of the wild anemones; and the storks soared aloft into the air to gaze upon the sun. The Indian huts, scattered over the hills and in the valleys, were streaked with radiance. Even the Groves of Death looked bright in the solitude.

Outougamiz and Celuta knelt by the tree under which the Sachem was breathing his last sigh. At a little distance stood Adario, his arms crossed, his garments rent, his hair erect, viewing the last moments of his friend. Chactas sat reclined against the tulip-tree: the wind was playing in his white locks and the reflection of the roseate light of morning coloured his pale forehead.

Making a last effort, the Sachem drew from his bosom a crucifix which Fenelon had given him. "Atala," said he, in a firmer tone, "let me die in thy religion! let me accomplish my promise to Father Aubry! I have

not been purified with holy water, but I ask of heaven the baptism of desire. Virtuous Chief of Prayer, who didst place in my hands this symbol of my salvation, meet me, I pray thee, at the gates of heaven. I will give death but little trouble; part of his work is already done. He will not have to close my eyelids like those of other men; I shall soon open upon celestial light those eyes which have long been shut to the light of earth."

Chactas exhaled virtue with his last sigh; as the perfumed tree of the American forests embalms the air when time or the storm has overthrown it. Outougamiz and Celuta, seeing the Sachem grow paler, arose, approached the tree, and embraced the old man's feet, which were already cold: in him they had lost their last hope. Adario withdrew without uttering a word, like a traveller who expects soon to rejoin a comrade who has departed a few hours before him.

The Savages were already assembled in

the Valley of Forests, to recommence the game at ball, when the news of the death of Chactas was spread among the multitude. On every side were heard the exclamations: "The glory of the Natchez is departed! Chactas, the great Sachem, is no more." The games were again interrupted; the grief was universal. Some Indian tribes, struck with the cause of the mourning which had mingled in the festival, began to dread the anger of heaven; they folded up their tents of skin and returned homewards.

Every thing once more threatened the plans of Ondouré with ruin: his secret messengers had lost all traces of the brother of Amelia; the council assembled by Chactas had discovered some hesitation; and the female chief who had almost accused herself, only sought one more interview with her accomplice to yield to or resist her remorse. At Fort Rosalie, Chepar, in spite of his security, could not help reflecting on the warnings

which were daily sent him by Father Souël, the governor-general of Louisiana, and even by Captain Artaguette; warnings which seemed to confirm the report of the desertion of a great number of negroes who had hidden themselves in the woods. Heaven at last seemed to declare in favour of innocence.

The oldest relatives of Chactas came to remove his body; the funeral ceremony was fixed for the following day at the third hour. Celuta, as the wife of the adopted son of Chactas, and Outougamiz, as the brother of that absent son, were informed that they were to take upon themselves the usual functions, and received orders to prepare accordingly.

Celuta passed her solitary day in deploring in her hut the fresh loss which she had sustained. Her constant return to a deserted hearth where she found no one to console her, filled her fancy with terror and her heart with sadness. Where were now René, Mila, Chactas, those relatives and friends who were

once wont to support her sinking spirits? Adario now sought only wild places: while Outougamiz, loaded with his own sufferings, scarcely enjoyed the possession of his reason. In the crowd she felt no symptoms of pity or benevolence. Every where she saw faces that expressed hatred, or sentiments yet worse to her than hate.

René did not return, though his return had been announced; and in his prolonged absence Celuta thought she saw a glimpse of hope. Misfortune is pious; solitude calls to prayer; and Celuta prayed. Sometimes she would ask for counsel from the Great Spirit of the Indians, sometimes from the Great Spirit of the Whites. To the latter she presented the innocent Amelia, whom the water of baptism had made a Christian, and who could more appropriately than her mother invoke the God of René. Suddenly an idea came upon Celuta, who arose and exclaimed:

"Manitou who protectest René, is it thou who inspirest me?"

Celuta strove to calm her first emotion, in order the better to meditate on her design; the more she examined it, the more it seemed to promise success: and she only waited for night to execute it.

Shadows covered the earth; the moon was not in the heavens, and nothing could be distinguished but the huge masses of wood and rock which were seen against the blue sky. Celuta left her cabin with a little light hidden in rushes, some ropes formed of wild hemp, and a roll of stuff woven from the mulberry-tree. Lighter than a shadow, she flew to the cavern of relics, into which she fearlessly descended. She attired herself in the remains of death, which she bound about her bosom and her forehead as proudly as a young girl adorns her head and neck to shine at a feast. She then wrapt herself in a long

white veil under which she hid her lamp of rushes.

Quitting the asylum of the dead, she crossed the country, the face of which was now covered with mist, and directed her steps to the temple of Athaënsic, in order to remove the fatal sheaf.

"If I carry away the sheaf," she said to herself, "the conspirators among the Natchez will no longer know what to do; they will fancy their plot discovered: they will be divided in opinion. Some will wish to hasten the execution of their conspiracy: others to abandon it. They will be forced to dispatch messengers to the various nations who are to join in the massacre, in order to warn them of the accident which has happened to the Natchez. Some confused reports will reach the ears of the French; and it is impossible in the confusion that the scheme should not fail. If thou dost this, Celuta, thou wilt save thy country from a crime, or

if the general massacre does take place, René will not return till the blow has been struck. Thou wilt thus have saved thy husband without revealing the secret, and without having violated the promise thou hast made to Adario."

The temple of Athaënsic was built in the midst of a cypress grove, which served as a sacred wood. The revelations of Mila had taught Celuta that the sheaf was deposited under the altar. In the interior of the temple a juggler, who was every two hours replaced by another, watched the treasure of vengeance, and, without a guard of Allouez had orders to slay any one who should dare to approach the sacred edifice. What will not the love of a woman's heart succeed in doing, even when she is not beloved! It was this love which inspired the spouse of René with the idea of personating a phantom. Though intrepid in the field of battle, the savages acquire from the silence or the sounds of their forests, a belief in and a

fear of apparitions. Even their priests, by a divine retribution, experience the same superstitious terrors which they employ to deceive others.

On arriving at the cypress grove, Celuta glided through the trees, and was soon but a few steps from the temple. She opened her white veil, and exhibited the figure of a skeleton by the light of her lamp. The rustling of her winding-sheet as she moved was heard by the Allouez; they turned their eyes to the spot from which the sound proceeded, and descried the spectre. Their weapons fell from their hands; some fled, and the rest, feeling their knees sink beneath them, had scarcely strength to crawl into the adjoining bushes.

Celuta approached the temple, opened one of the gates, and stood in the porch. The guardian priest was seated on the ground. The apparition caught his eyes, which opened wide; his mouth gaped and his skin shi-

vered. The Indian entered; walked with measured steps, stopped, again advanced, and stretched a bony hand over the head of the juggler, who would have cried out, but the words died on his tongue; a cold sweat covered him, and his teeth chattered with terror. Celuta finished her victory by touching with her cold hand the forehead of the priest, who sunk senseless on the ground.

The daughter of Tabamica reached the altar, and searched every where for a door. Twenty times did she go round the stone without discovering aught. She tried to lift the sacred table, stooped, rose again, passed the lamp along every part of the tabernacle, overthrew the idol; yet the mysterious deposit escaped her search!

The time pressed: the guards and the juggler might recover from their panic. The sister of Outougamiz thought she heard voices without: she addressed prayers to love and her country; she vowed gifts and offer-

ings, and even if blood were required, she promised to give her own. Her eyes were obscured by tears of despair, as she now looked towards the gate of the temple, now again at the altar. Did she not feel a movement in one of the steps of that altar? Her heart beat—she knelt down and pressed the obedient plank, which yielded: it slid horizontally under her hand. Joy and terror! hope and fear! Celuta plunged her naked arm into the opening, and with the tips of her fingers touched the sheaf.

But how was it to be withdrawn? the opening was not large enough and the plank refused to move farther. There was but one means left—this was to seize the reeds one by one: thrice did Celuta plunge her arm into the opening, thrice she drew out some of the reeds as if she were snatching the life of René from Fate! But she could not reach them all: those at the bottom of the sheaf were beyond the reach of her hand. The heroine deter-

mined to fly with her pious sacrilege—she had withdrawn eight of the reeds—there now remained only three, the twelfth having been already burned. She fled from the temple just as the priest was recovering from his fit. But soon buried in the depths of the grove, she cast off the horrible ornaments, rolled up her veil, and restored the bones to the earth after having implored them to pardon her for disturbing their repose. "Sacred remains," said she, "ye may perhaps belong to an unfortunate being, and ye have succoured misfortune!"

Though Celuta's success had not been complete, at least she thought she had augmented René's chance of safety. If the massacre were advanced eight days, these eight days were retrenched from the number of those that threatened the life of the brother of Amelia. There remained now but three days of peril: who could tell whether the absence of the doomed man might not be pro-

longed beyond a period so brief? Celuta, on reaching her hut, threw the reeds into the fire, and approaching her child, who was asleep on a bed of moss, she looked at her by the light of the same lamp which had lighted the bones of the dead. The infant awoke, and smiled on her mother, who leant over her and covered her with kisses; she took the smile of innocence for one of approbation at the removal of the reeds. Celuta had no other counsellor than the little Amelia, who on entering the world had not rejoiced the heart of her father—that Amelia to whom René wished to be for ever unknown. It was over a forsaken cradle that a deserted wife consulted Heaven about an unhappy spouse, and looked into the future.

Outougamiz was now heard entering the hut. He had passed the day preceding and a great part of that night, in exploring the roads by which his friend might return. Nothing had presented itself to his search. He

remarked something more animated than usual in the looks of his sister. "Thou art gathering courage," said he, "for the funeral of our father. Let us make haste—it is time to go."

Celuta did not think it her duty to reveal to Outougamiz the sacrilege which she had committed, or to embarrass her brother with a fresh secret. She hastened to put on her mourning attire. By appearing early at the funeral of Chactas, she hoped to remove entirely from her all suspicion, when the loss of the reeds should be discovered.

When the brother and sister reached the hut of Chactas, the dawn was glimmering. His relations had lighted a great fire: the hut was purified with fresh water: and the body of the Sachem was dressed in a superb tunic and a mantle which had never been worn. Among the white tresses of the old man was placed a crown of crimson feathers. Celuta and Outougamiz were charged with painting

the features of the defunct. How sad an office! They knelt on each side of the body, which was extended on a mat. When the two orphans leant over the face of their father, their beautiful heads met together, and formed an arch over the brow of Chactas.

A Sachem who presided over the funeral ceremony, gave the colours and explained their meanings: the red on the cheeks was to be of different shades according to the character of the deceased: love is not of the same tint as bashfulness, and crime blushes not like virtue. The blue spread over the veins was to be the colour of the last sleep, as it is that of serenity. The tears of Celuta effaced her labours. The terrible farewell kiss was to finish the whole; and the lips of friendship and love were to meet the lips of death.

When this was over the matrons gave to the body of the old man the attitude which the infant has in its mother's bosom;—which meant, that death in restoring us to our

first mother, the Earth, brings us forth at the same time into another existence.

The crowd was now assembled: priests, Sachems, warriors, matrons, young women, and children, arrived in turn and assumed their places. The Sachems bore white wands in their hands: their heads were uncovered, and their hair in disorder: Adario was at their head. The French and the commandant of the fort joined the funeral procession as they had joined the games; and the crowd, while they waited to form the procession, arranged themselves in a vast semicircle at the door of the hut.

The part of the hut which was near the populace assembled was then removed, and Chactas was seen seated on a couch of state, and behind him lay his coffin of cedar wood and little bones joined together. There stood behind this barrier, a Sachem representing Chactas himself, who was to reply to the harangues addressed to the defunct.

The two favourite dogs of Chactas lay chained at his feet: they had not been slain as usual, because the Sachem abhorred blood: besides, he could have no need of his dogs to hunt in the land of souls, for there he would be engaged, said the crowd, in governing the shades. The old man's calumet of peace also lay at his feet: at his left side were seen his arms, the glory of his youth: on his right lay the staff which supported his old age. As men are more touched with the virtues of the sage than the hero, the sight of the old man's staff melted all hearts.

Adario began his address in the name of the Sachems. He advanced with a slow step into the midst of the crowd, and, with arms crossed, and looks turned toward his friend, he thus spoke:

"Brother, you loved your Country—you fought for it—you enlightened it with your wisdom. To tell what you have done is needless: you were the enemy of the oppressor,

the avenger of the oppressed: you were ever the asserter of independence. Your feet were like those of the stag which knows no bounds to its leap: your arm was an oaken branch which resists the tempest: your voice was that of the torrent, which nothing can silence. Those who dwelt in your heart know that it was too great to be grasped in the miserable hand of slavery. Your soul was the breath of liberty."

The Sachem who represented Chactas then spoke from behind the coffin:

"Brother, I thank you: I was free, and I am so yet: if my body seems to you enchained, your eyes are deceived: it is motionless, but it cannot suffer: it is therefore free. As for my soul, it keeps its own secret; farewell, brother!"

"Ye have not spoken of your mutual friendship," said Outougamiz as he arose, to the great surprise of the spectators.

Adario and the Sachem who represented

Chactas looked at each other, but said not a word.

The guardian of the Sun advanced to pronounce a speech in the name of the young warriors, when one of the arms of Chactas, which had been forcibly bent, escaped and made a motion as if to repulse Ondouré. A voice was heard to say, "The dead love him not—let him be gone!"

Celuta, the adopted daughter of Chactas, was charged to fasten the old man's arm again. In her black attire, and with her air of religious beauty, she might have been taken for one of those European women who devote themselves to the most painful of the works of charity.

Then Celuta, addressing herself to the defunct, said, "Father, art thou happy?"

"Yea, my daughter," replied the interpreting Sachem, "and if in the grave I should turn to relieve myself, my hand would be stretched to thee."

The representative of Chactas then replied to the speeches of the mothers, widows, girls, and children.

When these harangues were ended, the relations uttered three shouts of grief: and three sounds of the funeral conchs announced the removal of the body. The eight eldest Sachems, among whom was Adario, then advanced to the measure of a dead march to remove Chactas; they imitated the woodman, the mower, and the hunter, who cut the trees, and the corn, and bring down the bird. "Then," said Adario to Chactas, "Brother, "will you rest yourself?"

Then spoke the representative of the tomb, "Brethren, I have need of slumber."

Next four of the eight Sachems who bore the body, formed themselves into a square as they knelt: the other Sachems then lifted the bed where the dead body reclined, and placed it on the shoulders of the four Sachems who were kneeling; the latter then rose, and

showed the crowd the last remains of the idol of his country. The four old men, who were unincumbered, supported with their staves, the couch of Chactas, the coffin drawn upon wheels followed the body as the empty chariot follows the conqueror. They proceeded to the Groves of Death.

The tomb had been chosen near the rivulet of Peace: the grave was wide and deep, and lined with the finest skins. The eight Sachems deposited their brother in the coffin which was placed on its end at the head of the open grave. The old man thus placed resembled a statue in a niche. The funeral games commenced along a green valley which stretched beyond the grove.

The games began by wrestling among the young girls: a race of warriors followed the combat, and shooting with the bow, the race.

A squirrel was fastened by the foot with a long cord, to a stake painted with various colours, as a symbol of life among the Savages. The

agile animal turned round the stake, mounted, descended, re-mounted, and descended again, leaped, ran upon the grass, then regained the top of the stake, where he stood perched upon his hind legs, covering his body with his silken tail: this was the moving mark which the archers were to aim at. A bow of cypress wood was to be the prize of the victor.

This prize, like that of the race, was won by Outougamiz, who said to Celuta, "To whom shall I offer it? Mila is dead; René is absent; and I must slay my friend, if he should return."

While the crowd was occupied with the games, the high-priest arrived with a disturbed air, and vestments in disorder, looking every where, and asking every one around for the guardian of the Sun: he was pointed out among the assembly. He ran to him, and carried him into the thickest of the grove, from which they both issued a short time afterwards. Ondouré seemed moved: and

he was observed to whisper to Adario and to several of the other Sachems. The juggler declared that he had seen signs in the heavens, and that the omens were not favourable —that the ceremony must be abridged.

The ordinary presents were then offered to the deceased. Chactas was lowered into his last dwelling, and while the hill of the grave was rearing, the juggler sung the song of death.

THE HIGH-PRIEST.

" Is it a phantom which I see, or is it only air? it is a phantom! Half risen from a closed tomb, it ascends from the sepulchral stone like a vapour. Its eyes are hollow, its mouth is tongueless, it hath no lips, it is dumb, yet it speaks: it breathes, yet it has no breath: when it loves, instead of giving life, it annihilates. Its heart beats not. Phantom, let me live! "

A YOUNG FEMALE.

"My sister, seest thou that little rivulet which loses itself suddenly in the sand? how charming are its banks embellished with flowers! but how soon it disappears! Between its source hidden under the alders, and its tomb under the maple, scarcely can you count sixteen paces."

CHORUS OF YOUNG MAIDENS.

"We have seen the young Ondoia: her lips were pale, her eyes were like two drops of dew which the wind blows about on a leaf of the azalea. We behold her half open her mouth and droop her head. Our mothers told us that this was death—that a single night had thus withered the maiden. Mothers, is it then sweet to die!"

THE YOUNG WARRIORS.

"How mad is he who cries, "Save me from death!' He ought rather to say, "Save

me from life!" O death, in the midst of combats how beautiful thou art! how eloquent art thou when thou speakest to us of our country, with glory in view!"

THE CHILDREN.

"We require a cradle of three feet in length: and our graves are not longer. Our mothers are sufficient to bear us in their arms to the abodes of death. We will drop from their bosoms on the grass of the tomb, as the tear of morning drops from the stalk of a lily to lose itself among the herbage."

THE SACHEMS.

"Death is a benefit to the wise: they are ever engaged in preparing for it: they pass their lives in contemplating its charms. See that unfortunate being who writhes on his couch: his eyes are burning, his eyelids never cover them: his heart is full of sighs: but suddenly the sighs of his heart cease: his

eyes gently close: he stretches himself on his couch. What has happened? He is dead! Unfortunate man, where are thy griefs now?"

CHORUS OF PRIESTS.

"Life is a torrent, which as it flows leaves behind it a channel more or less profound, which time finally effaces."

The hymn of death was scarcely ended when the crowd dispersed. The words of the high-priest, amid the funeral ceremony, were the subject of every conversation, and the cause of universal disquietude. The Sachems and the chiefs of the young men who knew the secret were assembled at the Rock of Council: the juggler there told them of the phantom, and the removal of part of the reeds from the sheaf.

The conspirators grew pale, Outougamiz rose, and exclaimed:

"Sachems, you must now see that never was plot more impious framed by man. The Great Spirit disapproves it: he has called one of our ancestors from the dead, to carry away the fatal reeds. Heaven has spoken—let us then abandon this deadly project. What! is it the very men whom you have invited to your festival—the men who have this very day rendered funeral honours to Chactas, that you are about to slay? They partook of both your pleasures and your pains—their smiles and tears were both sincere; and you replied to them by false ones! Sachems, Outougamiz knows not how to swallow murder and crime: he is not an old man, nor an oracle: but he foretels to you with the voice of the gold Manitou which he wears on his bosom, that such a crime, if it is perpetrated, will bring down the extermination of the Natchez and the ruin of our country."

This discourse surprised the council; no

one could imagine where Outougamiz the Simple had gathered his words: but with the exception of two or three Sachems, all the rest of the council scoffed at the generous opinion of the young warrior. Adario praised the sentiments of his nephew; but he spoke strongly against the strangers.

"Let us cease," said he, "to lament the fate of the Whites. To listen to Outougamiz would not one imagine that our country is free, that we cultivate our plains in peace? What then has happened of late? What happy planet has suddenly shone upon our destinies? I appeal to all the warriors now present, if we are not more despoiled and more oppressed than ever? It would be enough then, that these strangers, who have killed my son, who have massacred my aged partner, and reduced my daughter to misery; it would be enough that these strangers should come to witness our games, to make Adario forget all that he has lost, to renounce

his legitimate vengeance, to consent to the enslavement of his country, to deceive all the other nations leagued in our cause, and who have confided their independence to our care? May the earth swallow up the Natchez, ere they become guilty of such cowardice,—of such abominable perjury!"

Adario was interrupted by the loudest acclamations, and by the repeated shout of "Death to the Whites!"

As soon as the old man could again obtain silence, he thus went on:

"Sachems, to abandon our enterprize is impossible; but shall we execute our plan on the day when the last of the three reeds shall be consumed? or shall we wait for the day appointed before the eight reeds were removed? Sachems, decide!"

A violent agitation ensued in the assembly; some required that the massacre should take place as soon as the remaining rushes were burned: they pretended that

such was the will of the Spirits, since they had permitted part of the sheaf to be stolen from the altar: others insisted that the grand blow should not be struck until the expiration of the time originally fixed.

"What madness," cried the chief of the Chickasaws, "to undertake the destruction of your enemies before all the red men are arrived! We still want five of the most powerful tribes. Besides, shall we not run the risk of failing in the general design by attempting to execute it too soon? If the plan is ripe here eight days sooner than elsewhere, is it not clear that the other colonies belonging to our oppressors will escape the general vengeance, and that they will speedily unite to exterminate us? In order to attack our enemies in three days, it would be necessary to warn the various allied nations of our intentions; and would three days suffice for the swiftest messengers to con

vey the news of our resolutions to people so remote?"

Ondouré supported the opinion of the Chickasaw: René was not yet arrived—would he arrive within three days? Then, if the massacre were precipitated, might he not escape? The guardian of the Sun ridiculed the notion that the Great Spirit had sent a dead person to remove the rushes from the temple; he accused the guards of cowardice, and vowed that he would speedily discover the pretended phantom.

The juggler warmly repelled this attack; for whether he did or did not believe in the phantom, he saw that it was necessary to defend his art, and to maintain the honour of the priests. The Yazous, the Miamis, and part of the Natchez, opposed in turn the advice of Ondouré and of the Chickasaw. All the warriors spoke at once; from contradictions they proceeded to insults. The conspirators rose, sat down again, shouted, seized each other by

the mantle, threatened each other by gestures, looks, and tones; at last a Sachem of the Yazous, renowned among the savages, succeeded in obtaining a hearing; he opposed the opinion of the Chickasaws. He first maintained that it was possible that before the removal of part of the sheaf there might have been an error either in the number of reeds allotted to the Natchez or in that of the other nations: and that therefore nothing proved that their vengeance could be executed every where on the same day. Finally, he added, that the disappearance of the eight reeds from the temple of the Natchez was certainly an effect of the will of the Spirits; that the same power might have withdrawn the same number of reeds from all the allied nations, and that consequently the extermination of the Whites would every where take place on the same day. To these arguments of policy and religion the Yazou chief added a motive of interest, which, by di-

viding the Chickasaws, fixed the determination of the council.

"Canoes," said the Sachem, "laden with vast riches for the Whites, have, it is said, anchored at Fort Rosalie; they will only remain there a few days; and if we exterminate the French, before their departure, we may seize upon the treasures they contain."

The Chickasaws, whose cupidity was known to all the Indians, feigned to be convinced by the eloquence of the Yazou; but they were only persuaded by their avarice; and they came to the conclusion of executing the plan resolved on upon the night when the last of the three remaining reeds should be consumed. An immense majority of the council voted for the resolution.

It was agreed that the grand games should be continued as if Chactas had not died, and as if the day of the massacre were not anticipated. It was also resolved that the younger warriors engaged in the conspiracy

should not be informed of the altered plan, till a few hours previous to the massacre.

When these resolutions had been taken, the assembly separated; Outougamiz left the council with a feeling of joy. As he crossed the forests at midnight, to return to the hut of Celuta, he said to himself: "If René arrives not in three days he is safe!" But he soon began to reflect, that if René should arrive before the three days were at an end, the hour of his death would be greatly accelerated, and that there would be eight days less to profit by any favourable accidents that might arise.

The young Savage then began to reckon the few moments which the brother of Amelia, perchance, had to pass upon the earth. The new resolution of the council had compelled his ideas to fix themselves upon a fearful object, had anew laid open all his wounded feelings, and had roused his soul from its trance of grief. The despair of Outougamiz drew from him the most frightful cries,

which the echoes repeated, and the Natchez who heard them fancied them the last sighs of their country,

Celuta recognized the voice of her brother: she hastily quitted her hearth, ran into the woods, and called on the friend of René, whom she traced by his accents of grief.

"Who calls me?" said Outougamiz.

"'Tis thy sister," replied Celuta.

"Celuta!" said Outougamiz, approaching her: "Oh, if thou art Celuta, thou art indeed unhappy!"

"Is René dead then?" cried Celuta, as she advanced to her brother.

"No," replied Outougamiz, "but the hour of his death is at hand. In three days will come the day of fate! in three days all is over with René, you, myself, the whole world!"

Scarcely had he pronounced these words when Celuta, in a wild and stifled voice, murmured: "It is I who have slain him!"

From her brother's expressions Celuta

easily guessed the anticipation of the day of massacre. She saw that if René, instead of prolonging his absence, re-appeared suddenly among the Natchez, by the removal of the reeds she must have hastened his destruction. For a long time Celuta, overcome with her grief, made vain efforts to speak; at last her voice escaped in sobs from the depths of her bosom.

"It was I who stole the reeds!"

"Wretch!" cried her brother, "was it thou . . . thou! sacrilegious, perjured, homicide!"

"Yes," replied Celuta, in despair, "it was I; I did it all. Punish me; hide me for ever from the light of day, render me that one brotherly kindness. The torments I endure are beyond my strength."

Outougamiz felt as if annihilated, and leaned against the trunk of a tree: he spoke no more—his grief seemed to overwhelm him. At length he broke silence.

"My sister," said he, "you are unhappy —most unhappy—even more unhappy than your brother!"

Celuta remained mute. Outougamiz added, "You are now forced to become a second time perjured, and to reveal the secret to René: the secret is now your's—it is you who have assassinated my friend: but I must also state one thing—and that is, that I feel myself bound to acquaint the Sachems with the whole: you would not wish me to become your accomplice and to betray my oath."

Outougamiz paused after these words, and then added, "Yes, it is the duty of both: tell the secret to René when he shall return—and I will tell it to the Sachems: if my friend has time to escape, my joy will be like that of heaven: but be speedy, for I am bound to reveal all that you are about to do."

The simple and sublime young man then withdrew.

Ondouré had returned from the council

with a perturbed mind: the majority of the assembly had divided against his opinion. The proposed crime would have lost in his eyes the greatest part of its charms, if René were not to be involved in the massacre, and if Celuta were not the prize. He determined to proceed to the dwelling, which seemed to be altogether abandoned by others, even by Outougamiz. Perhaps Celuta might have received some intelligence of René—perhaps it was that faithful and inventive spouse who had removed the reeds from the temple—and it was of great importance to the guardian of the Sun to gain information on those two points.

He arrived at the hut of Celuta, at the moment when she had left it attracted by the cries of her brother. The interior of the hut was dimly lighted by a lamp which hung over the hearth. Ondouré searched every corner of that asylum of grief: but he found no one but the daughter of René,

who was asleep in a cradle which was placed near her mother's bed; he was tempted to render her slumber eternal.

The couch of the widow and the child, instead of awakening in the heart of the monster any remorse or pity, only kindled in it the fires of love and jealousy. Ondouré felt a flame thrill through the marrow of his bones: his eyes flashed with voluptuousness, his senses were on fire: darkness, solitude, silence, all encouraged his desires. Ondouré threw himself on the modest couch of Celuta, and lavished on it his caresses and embraces: he fixed his eager lips upon the spot where he fancied she lay, and covered with burning kisses the veil which might have touched the lips or the bosom of beauty. In his frenzy he swore that he would perish or obtain the reality of those pleasures of which even the image enkindled the desires of his soul. But Celuta, engaged in weeping in the woods with her brother, appeared not: and Ondouré,

all whose moments were occupied, was forced to quit the hut.

A woman, or rather a spectre, advanced towards him: and scarcely had he left the abode which was sullied by his presence, when he found himself face to face with Akansie.

"I have too long endured my torments," said the mother of the Sun. "After having discovered thy visits to my rival, I summoned thee before me, and thou hast not obeyed. I now find thee leaving that spot where thy steps and mine are enchained by Athaënsic: but, wretch! I address thee no longer in the language of reproach: love is extinguished in my heart: thou art below my contempt; but I have crimes to expiate and vengeance to satisfy. I have forewarned thee: I go to denounce myself to the Sachems, and thee also: thy plots, thy crimes, and my own shall be revealed: and justice shall be done to all."

Ondouré was the more alarmed at these words, as he saw, by the light of dawn, that the visage of Akansie no longer wore that languor which told him that the jealous woman still loved: there was now nothing but despair and indifference to be traced in the features of Akansie. Ondouré very soon formed his resolution.

Not far from the hut of Celuta was a marsh, the impure abode of serpents. Ondouré affected violent repentance: he feigned to adore her whom he had never loved: he encircled her with supplicating arms, and conjured her to listen to him. Akansie refused the embraces of the wicked one, and loaded him with those reproaches which a neglected passion, and contempt long suppressed, know so well how to find. "If you will not hear me," cried the guardian of the Sun, "I will now slay myself!"

Akansie was criminal—but she had loved so much! There still remained of all her

love a certain involuntary complaisance: she suffered herself to be allured towards the marsh, listening to the excuses which deceived her no longer, but which charmed her still. Ondouré, still vindicating himself, and walking on with his victim, at last brought her to a solitary place. He assumed the language of passion, which his offended mistress suffered to be seen only in her smiles: he then sunk before her, and promised to pass at her feet a life of gratitude and adoration! Akansie felt her anger expiring: and Ondouré, feigning a transport of love, prostrated himself before his idol.

Akansie was then standing upon a narrow ledge which separated the stagnant waters, where a multitude of rattlesnakes were playing with their young, in the last warmth of autumn. Ondouré embraced the feet of Akansie, and, drawing them to him, the unfortunate woman sunk into the poisonous wave; she sunk with all her weight. The reptiles, the venom of which is more virulent

when they have a family to defend, uttered their sounds of death: springing forth at once, they struck with their flattened heads and their hollow teeth the enemy which troubled their maternal affection.

The exultation of crime brightened the face of Ondouré. Akansie, struggling against the double death of the serpents and the waters, exclaimed: "I have well merited this; wretch, crown thy crimes: immolate thy last victims, but know that thy hour is also come!"

"Yes," replied the traitor, dropping his mask, "yes, it is I who slay thee because thou wouldst have betrayed me. Die! my crimes *thou* hast shared. I disdain thy threats! henceforth there is no remission for me: my last sigh shall be for a new crime and for a love that is thy agony. Thou shalt not have the head of Celuta, but I will bestow upon it the kisses which thou hast permitted me to pour upon that charming face!"

Ondouré then, howling as if he already inhabited hell, abandoned the woman who had sacrificed every thing to him.

God caused the reprobate to feel at this moment a foretaste of his eternal vengeance. Some hunters were in sight. They recognized the guardian of the Sun and advanced towards him. Akansie was still floating upon the waters, and it was impossible to hide her from the sight of the hunters: they were about to hasten to her assistance: might she not still have sufficient life to speak, were she brought to the shore? The fears of Ondouré for a moment froze his heart, but he soon recovered his courage, and showed himself worthy of his crimes. The means of deception which he had assumed were not altogether sure, but they were the only ones which remained to be taken; he would at all events have opposed them to any accusation of murder. Ondouré accordingly summoned the hunters with every appearance of the most

violent despair: "Come hither," cried he, "and aid me to save the female chief, who has fallen into the water." In so saying he feigned to assist Akansie, but in reality was plunging her head into the water.

The hunters hastened to the spot, removed the serpents with tamarind branches, and drew forth from the marshes the mother of the young Sun.

At first she exhibited no signs of life, but she soon began to move, her eyes opened, and her look was fixed on Ondouré, who recoiled from her glance as if he were already under the eyes of the God of Vengeance.

Stifled cries, which sounded like the death-rattle, issued from the bosom of Akansie. She writhed upon the earth like the serpents which had stung her. Her skin, as usual in cases of bites from the rattlesnake, was marked with stains of black, yellow, and green: and over these was a livid and shining skin, like varnish. The fingers of the guilty

woman had burst: an impure froth came from her mouth: and the hunters contemplated with horror the spectacle of vice chastised by the hands of the Great Spirit.

Celuta, who was returning from the neighbouring woods, and was regaining her hut by the ridges of the marsh, was a fresh witness sent by Heaven to this scene. On seeing the punishment of the woman, she was filled with profound pity, and lavished on her all her cares and attentions. Akansie, recognizing the generous Indian, made many efforts to speak, but her swollen tongue only suffered her to utter inarticulate sounds. When she found she could not make herself understood, her despair overcame her: and she rolled upon the earth which she bit in the convulsions of death."

"Great Spirit," cried Celuta, "accept the repentance of this unfortunate woman! Pardon her as I do, if she has ever injured me!"

At these words tears would have flowed

from the eyes of Akansie: and there shone upon her brow a serenity which would have adorned her, if any thing could have effaced the distortion of her features. Her lips seemed to assume a smile of admiration and gratitude, as she expired in agony, but without disclosing the fatal secret. Ondouré, now freed from his fears, inly thanked Heaven, which was shocked at his gratitude. Celuta, thus once more pursuing her road homeward, addressed the rising sun: "Thou hast seen in two mornings the deaths of Chactas and Akansie: let mine be like that of the former!"

Ondouré apprized the friends of the female chief of Akansie's death, that the body might be removed: and in order not to alarm the minds of the conspirators by a second funeral procession, the Sachems determined that the rites of burial (which were never to be celebrated) should not be performed until after the massacre.

The guardian of the Sun, who had become more potent than ever in consequence of the death of the female chief, and forgetting that he had either loved or assassinated her, repaired to the valley of the forests. The games had recommenced. Outougamiz, at the command of the old men, had joined the players. A few moments of reflection had been enough to tranquillize him about the pious theft committed by his sister; and he thought it unnecessary to give immediate information to the council, as René, not having arrived, could not be informed of the secret by Celuta. Even on the supposition of the return of the brother of Amelia, Outougamiz felt so much confidence in the virtue of Celuta, that he was certain of her silence, even when she had rendered the secret more fatal than before. Finally, if Outougamiz were to disclose all to the Sachems, they might perhaps condemn Celuta to death without benefit to any one, for the massacre would still

take place. And who could tell whether it was well or ill that the day of the massacre should be retarded or hastened as it regarded the destiny of the white warrior?

Such were the reflections of Outogamiz. The brother and sister now counted each hour that glided by. They looked to see if the sun was sinking to the horizon; if the ephemeron, which issues from the waters at the approach of evening, had begun to fly over the meadows; and they said, "Another day is past and René is not yet returned!" Our illusions are boundless: and though a thousand times deceived by the bitterness of the cup, we eagerly return it to our lips.

The enemy having refused to receive the calumet of peace, René had sent back the warriors who were the bearers of presents to the Illinois, and was returning alone to Natchez. Overwhelmed with the past, and hoping nothing from the future; insensible to every thing save to the wisdom of Chactas, the friendship of Outougamiz, and the virtue of

Celuta, he never suspected that his life was sought; and his enemies were in their turn far from guessing how little he regarded it. The Natchez accused him of imaginary crimes. They had condemned him for them, and he thought no more of the Natchez than of the rest of the world. His ideas were like his desires, they inhabited an unknown region.

One day, in the course of his long journey, he reached a vast prairie in which there were no trees. Nothing was to be seen but an old thorn covered with late blossoms, which grew on the border of an Indian road. The sun was about to set as the brother of Amelia, reached the thorn. He resolved to pass the night on this spot, and in looking around he saw a green turf, on which some sheaves of maize were laid. By these he knew that this was an infant's grave, and that these were the maternal offerings. Thanking Providence for having called

him to the feast of death, he sat down between two of the large roots of the thorn which twined together at its foot. The breeze of evening whistled at intervals through the foliage of the tree, shaking down its blossoms, which fell upon the head of René like a silver shower. After refreshing himself, the traveller fell asleep with the cricket's cry.

The mother, who had buried her child on the border of this road, came at midnight to bring new gifts and to moisten with her milk the turf of its grave. She fancied she beheld some shade or phantom stretched upon the ground; she was seized with terror; but maternal love, stronger than fear, prevented her from flying. Advancing silently towards the unknown object, she beheld a young white man who slept with his face turned towards the stars, and his hand thrown over his forehead. The Indian glided on her knees towards the bed of the stranger whom she took for a propitious divinity.

Some insects fluttered about the brow of René; she softly dispersed them, lest they should awake the Spirit, and startle the soul of her child, which might be floating about the good Genius. The dew fell in abundance; the mother extended her veil between her hands, and held it over the head of René. "Thou dost shelter my infant's soul from the cold," said she to herself, "and it is but just that I should shelter thee."

Some confused sounds, followed by some indistinct words, now escaped the lips of René. The words which he uttered were by turns pronounced in his native tongue and in that of the Savages. The Indian wished to profit by the oracle; and she replied to René as he muttered. There thus arose between them a kind of dialogue. "Why hast thou quitted me?" said René in Natchez.

"Who?" asked the Indian.

René replied not.

"I love it," said the brother of Amelia a moment after.

"Whom?" again enquired the Indian.

"Death," replied René in French.

After a long silence René said: "Is that the body which I bore?" And he added in a higher tone: "there they are all; Amelia, Celuta, Mila, Outougamiz, Chactas, Artaguette!"

René then heaved a sigh, and turning on his left side, spoke no more.

The noise which the Indian could not help making as she withdrew awoke the brother of Amelia. He was at first surprised to see a woman by his side, but he soon found that it was the mother of the child, on whose grave he lay. He placed his hands upon her, uttered the three cries of grief, and said: "Pardon me, I have eaten a part of thy infant's food; but I was a traveller and hungry. Thy son hath given me hospitality."

"And I," said the Indian, "believed thou

wert a Spirit, and I questioned thee in thy slumbers."

"What said I to thee?" asked René.

"Nothing," replied the Indian.

René had missed his way: he enquired the road which he was to pursue: "Thou art turning thy back on the Natchez," replied the female Savage: "if thou continuest to walk towards the north thou wilt never arrive there." Strange destiny of man! If René had not encountered this woman, he would have strayed farther and farther from the fatal spot. The Indian showed him his road, and left him, after recommending to his prayers the child which she had lost.

The day then rose which was to be succeeded by a night so fatal! Celuta and her brother passed it in roaming through the woods, divided between the fear of meeting René and the hope of preventing his appearance if they met him; and in regretting Mila, so light of foot, so successful in finding whom she sought.

The game of the bones, which began after that of ball, gained by the Natchez, had continued in the Valley of the Forests. An hour before sunset, the presiding Sachem went to the various groups of players, and said to them in a low voice:

"Quit your games, return to your tents, and there await the Sachems of your several nations."

The young men looked at each other with astonishment, and, letting the bones fall on the ground, withdrew. The night came; the sky was covered with a thick veil. Every breeze had ceased to sigh; darkness mute and deep enveloped the desert.

After many fruitless researches, Celuta returned to her hut, and reflected that in a few hours René would be saved or lost. The lover who had so often longed for the return of her beloved, the wife who so often had arisen joyfully, on fancying she heard the steps of her husband, now trembled at the

slightest sound, and only wished for complete silence. But a short time ago, Celuta would have given her life to have spared the slightest pain to René; now she would have blessed any accident, which, without being fatal, would have stayed the white warrior on his way to the Natchez.

At Fort Rosalie the French were far from feeling secure. Chepar alone persisted in refusing to open his eyes. Fresh couriers from the governor-general, Captain Artaguette, and Father Souël, announced the existence of a conspiracy. The council was assembled, and the negro Imley, who had been arrested in the woods, was brought in for examination.

The facts communicated by the missionary proved exact in all their details. They indicated Ondouré as the head of the plot. Imley, when interrogated, denied every thing, except what he could not deny, namely, his own flight. He said he had quitted his master as

the bird seeks its liberty when the door of the cage is opened. But, when pressed by insidious questions, and certain of his condemnation to death, the negro, instead of replying, began to ridicule his judges; he mimicked their gestures, affected their air, and counterfeited their voice in a way that shewed extraordinary imitative talents. Febriano encouraged his comic vein, and the negro gave a copy of the commandant so striking, that an involuntary laugh convulsed the hall. Chepar, in a rage, commanded the slave to be put to the torture, which was immediately done. The African braved all his tortures with a constancy truly heroic, continuing his mockery in the midst of his agonies, and never suffering a word to escape him which might discover the secret of the Savages. He was then removed from the rack to the gibbet. He then sung of Izephar, laughed, clapped his hands, leaped joyfully in spite of the dislocation of his members, and suddenly fell

down dead. He had suffocated himself with his tongue, a mode of death practised by several African nations. The character of Imley, which was a compound of levity and force, never for a moment betrayed any change: the Negro valued nothing but love and liberty, he treated both with the same indifference as life and death.

The commandant looked on the adventure of Imley as that of a fugitive slave, which had no connexion with the designs which were attributed to the Savages. He treated the missionaries as poltroons; and accused the colonists with inconsiderately spreading alarms as soon as a negro was missing. Urged by Febriano, who was bought by Ondouré, but who was ignorant of the plot, Chepar even went the length of putting in irons those inhabitants who demanded permission to arm themselves. He refused to believe in a conspiracy, which at the very

moment was about to burst under his feet from the bosom of the earth.

The young warriors, after quitting the games, had taken their arms. The presiding Sachem re-appeared; and knocking gently in the darkness at the door of each hut, he said:

"Let the young warriors assemble by divers roads at the subterraneous lake: there will they find the Sachems: let the women, after the departure of the warriors, shut themselves up in their huts; and there let them watch in silence and darkness."

Instantly the young warriors repaired to the place of rendezvous through the dark. The doors of the huts were closed on the women and children, the lights were extinguished, and all the Savages quitted the desert, except a few sentinels placed here and there behind the trees. Outougamiz, with the rest of his tribe, descended towards the lake.

To the east of the great village of the

Natchez, in the same cypress-grove where rose the temple of Athaënsic, a deep cavern opened like the shaft of a mine. It was impossible to enter it without a ladder and a torch. At the depth of one hundred feet there was a strand which bordered a lake. On this lake, which seemed like that which flows through the land of shades, some savages, provided with torches and lanterns, had one day the boldness to embark. Around it were to be seen only bare rocks stretching from its dusky sides, or suspended like arches over the abyss. Sounds of lamentation, horrid noises, and frightful howlings deafened the navigators as they penetrated into these solitudes of night and water. Drawn along by a rapid and tumultuous current, it was not without strong efforts that these courageous men succeeded in gaining the bank: when they terrified, by the narrative of their adventures, all who might be tempted to follow their example.

Such was the spot which the conspirators had fixed on for the place of assembly. It was from this subterranean abode that the liberty of the New World was to start forth —that it was to call into the light of day those nations who had been buried by Europeans in the bowels of the earth. Already were the young warriors assembled, and expecting the revelation of the mystery which their Sachems had promised them.

On the edge of the lake stood a large fragment of rock, which the jugglers had transformed into an altar. On it were seen, by the gleam of a torch, three hideous shapes, of unequal size. That in the centre, the Manitou of liberty, was a head taller than the others: in its features, rudely sculptured, you might discern a wild independence, inimical to the yoke of laws, and almost impatient of the chains of Nature. The other two figures represented a White Man and a Savage. A fire of bones burned before these

idols, casting about them a smoky radiance and a penetrating odour. Human blood, poisons extracted from various serpents, and venomous herbs gathered with cabalistic words, filled a cypress vase. A nocturnal breeze swept over the lake, and its waters rose to the vaults of the abyss; and the whole scene—the tempest in the bowels of the earth, the threatening idols, the vase of blood, the death-like fire, the priests waving vipers about with fearful evocations, the crowd of savages attired in their strange and divers habiliments, and surrounded by subterraneous rocks—gave a striking image of hell.

Suddenly one of the jugglers, with arms outstretched towards the lake, cried aloud: "Divinity of Vengeance, is it thou who springest from the abyss on the wings of the storm? Receive our vows!"

The juggler then threw a viper into the waters: another priest poured the vase of blood on the fire—and threefold night gloom-

ed in the vaults. For a few minutes all was left in obscurity; when suddenly a bright gleam illumined the stormy waves and the fantastic rocks around. The idols had disappeared. Nothing now was seen on the stone which had served as the altar of vengeance, but the aged Adario, attired in his war-tunic, leaning with one hand on his tomahawk, and holding in the other a torch.

"Warriors," said he, "liberty is rising: the Sun of Freedom, which has remained for two hundred and fifty winters under the horizon, is once more about to gleam upon our forests. Hail, sacred dawn! my heart rejoices in thy rays, as the withering oak at the first smile of spring. At thy sight Adario has cast away his tattered garments; he hath washed his head like a young man; he is renewed by the breath of liberty."

"Give me three poniards."

Three daggers were thrown by the Sachem from the rock.

"Young warriors, ye are not met here to

deliberate: your Sachems have spoken for you at the rock of the lake, in the general council of the nations: they have sworn to purge our deserts of the robbers that infest them. Ye are but called on to devour the foreign bears. The moment of the feast is come. You will only quit these vaults to march to death or freedom. It will be the last time that ye will be obliged to hide yourselves in the depths of the earth, to speak the language of men!"

"Give me a hatchet."

Adario flung at his feet a hatchet stained with blood.

A shout of mingled joy and surprise broke from the young warriors, who were burning with courage. Adario again spoke:

"All has been arranged by your fathers. Your oppressors, plunged in sleep, expect not destruction. We march out of this cavern in three divisions: I will lead the Natchez, and conduct them through the darkness to

the scaling of the fort. You, Chickasaws, under the command of the Sachems, will form the second body: you are to attack the village of the Whites at Fort Rosalie.

" You, Miamis and Yazous, who compose the third division, guided in your vengeance by Ondouré and Outougamiz, are to destroy the Whites whose huts are scattered over the country. The black slaves, who wish, like you, to burst their chains, will second our efforts.

" Such, Oh young warriors, are the duties ye are called on to fulfil. This is not the private cause of the Natchez: the blow ye are about to strike will spread to an immeasureable distance. At the moment I am speaking to you, a thousand nations, hidden like you in the caves, are about to burst from them, like you, to exterminate the race of the stranger: the rest of the Red Men will not be slow to follow your example.

" As for me, I have but a day longer to

live: to-morrow I shall have rejoined Chactas, my wife, and my children: I have been permitted to survive only to avenge them. I recommend my daughter to your care."

He spoke: and cast the tomahawk amid the young warriors.

A general shout shook the vault: "Let us deliver our country!"

A young warrior was then seen to ascend the stone, and place himself beside Adario: it was Outougamiz, who thus spoke:

"Ye wished me so slay the white warrior who was my friend. He hath not arrived: therefore I will not slay him, but I will slay his assassin! Ye would that I murder the foreign deer in the night—I am no secret murderer. When day is come, if ye fight, I will fight with you. I vowed to keep the secret, and I have kept it: in a few hours the term of my oath will be passed, and I shall be free: and then I will use my liberty as I list. Warriors, I know not how to speak, because

I want understanding: but if I am like a timid bird in peace, I am a vulture in war: Ondouré, it is to thee I address these words: remember they are those of Outougamiz the Simple."

Outougamiz then leaped from the rock, like a diver who throws himself into the waves: a little after he was sought for, but they found him not.

Ondouré had attended to no part of the speech of Celuta's brother but that passage in which he congratulated himself on René's absence. From this the guardian of the Sun experienced the liveliest alarm: he found himself on the point of executing his plot without having attained the chief object in forming it. Celuta, by withdrawing the reeds, might applaud herself with having obtained the first of her wishes—the salvation of her spouse. There were no means by which Ondouré could retard the catastrophe, and

therefore, as in all human affairs, the event must come as heaven had ordained.

The warriors left the cavern, and hid in the thick cypress wood, they divided themselves into three parties. Seated on the ground in deepest silence, they waited for the order to march. Midnight approached: the last reed was about to be burned in the temple.

How differently was Celuta occupied in her hut! Trembling at the slightest murmur of the leaves, and with her eyes constantly fixed on the door, counting by the beatings of her heart every minute of that last hour, she could not have long supported such anguish, she must have died. The very silence, as she listened, seemed to her filled with sinister noises: sometimes she fancied she heard far-off voices, sometimes hurrying steps. Is it not in reality a footstep which echoes over the desert path? The sound rapidly approaches. Celuta can no longer doubt: she wishes to rise, but her strength

fails her: she remains chained to her seat, with a brow cold with perspiration. A man appears at the threshold—it was not René! It was the good grenadier of New Orleans, the son of Celuta's ancient hostess, the soldier of Captain Artaguette.

He brought a note written by his captain from the post of the Yazous. What happiness, what relief, when, fearing and expecting a terrible catastrophe, a friend was seen to enter instead of a victim or an enemy! Celuta, recovering her strength, ran with open arms to the grenadier, but suddenly remembering the general danger—that René was not the only white man to be murdered, that all the whites were doomed to the poniard, that in a moment longer Jacques might be massacred—"Son of my aged white mother," cried she, "he whom thou seekest is not here: return to the place from whence thou camest, thou art not in safety in this hut: in the name of the Great Spirit, begone!"

The grenadier understood not what she said: he shewed her the note, which was not for René but herself. But Celuta could not read it. Jacques and Celuta made numberless gestures, and endeavoured mutually to comprehend each other, but without success. At this moment an hour-glass which belonged to René, and by which the Indian had learned to divide the time, let fall its last grain of sand, announcing that the hour had expired. Celuta saw the fatal minute sink into eternity; uttering a cry, she snatched the note from the hands of Jacques, and pushed him out of the hut. The soldier having accomplished his errand, and being unable to comprehend the extraordinary behaviour of Celuta, crossed the woods rapidly in order to reach Fort Rosalie before sunrise.

What were the contents of the captain's note, none ever knew. Celuta, as she looked at the letter, and remembered the words and gestures of the soldier, whose air was gay, let

a ray of hope beam on her heart, a pale gleam soon extinguished in the darkness.

Now was every moment among the Natchez dedicated to death: a few hours more and René, if he returned not, was safe from the catastrophe which, perhaps, had already begun among his countrymen.

Oh that Celuta, at the expense of her own life, could have hastened the flight of time! A fresh sound was now heard; was it the assassin who came to seek René in his hut? they would not find him there. Could it be the brother of Amelia himself? Celuta ran to the door: oh miracle! it was Mila! Mila, pale, worn, her hair hanging down, and her person covered with rags, looking as if she had just quitted the grave, yet still charming! Celuta recoiled to the extremity of the hut: "Shade of my sister, comest thou for me? Is the hour of fate arrived?"

"I am no phantom," replied Mila, falling

on her sister's bosom. "I am thy own little Mila."

The two sisters then embraced tenderly, mingling their tears and souls together. Mila spoke rapidly:

"After the discovery of the secret, Ondouré carried me off. I was shut up in a cavern, and suffered all sorts of evils: but I have deceived the Allouez: this night, I know not why, my gaolers left me for a short time: they were armed, and went to converse with some other warriors under the trees. As I was continually seeking means to escape, I followed the wretches. I glided behind them: and once out of my prison, they would sooner have caught the bird in the air than Mila in the woods. I fled. Where is Outougamiz? Has the white warrior returned? Hast thou told him the secret, or must I? There are yet eight nights to elapse before the catastrophe, if the amo-

rous juggler told me the true number of the reeds."

"Oh Mila!" cried Celuta, "I am the most guilty, most unfortunate of women! I have hastened the death of René: I have stolen eight of the reeds; and at the very hour I am speaking to thee, they are striking the blow."

"Hast thou done this?" said Mila: "I did not think thee so courageous. Is René then arrived?"

"No," replied Celuta.

"Then why," said Mila, "dost thou reproach thyself? Thou hast saved my deliverer: there are but a few hours more to pass, and all danger is over. But what dost thou? what doth Outougamiz during these hours? Thou dost always begin well, Celuta, and finish ill. Thinkest thou to save René only by weeping on thy mat? I know not how to sit thus tranquil: I cannot sacrifice my feelings: I cannot doubt of the virtues of my

friends, or melt over the fate of a pitiless country, and keep the secret of assassins. Wretches, ye have let me escape from my living tomb, and I will reveal your iniquities! I will save my deliverer if he has not already fallen into their hands?" Mila then forced herself from her sister's arms, and fled, crying out, "We are losing irreparable moments!"

From the day on which René had met the Indian woman who had pointed out his way to him, he had been journeying quietly towards the land of the Natchez. As he proceeded he felt less sad: his blackest griefs seemed to disperse; he was about to see once more his wife and child,—those charming beings against whom there was nothing but the misfortune which had smitten the brother of Amelia. René regretted his letter: he blamed himself for that sort of indifference which a devouring grief had left at the bottom of his heart: forsaking his natural cha-

racter, he gradually yielded to the most tender and affectionate emotion: and this return to serenity seemed like that relief which the dying man experiences before his departure. Celuta was so beautiful, and she had suffered so much for him! She had loved him so much! And then his friends, Outougamiz, Chactas, Artaguette, Mila, were all waiting his arrival. He was once more about to join that society which was superior to every other on the earth: to lift upon his knee that second Amelia, who had all the charms of the first and none of her misfortunes.

These ideas, so different from those which he habitually cherished, brought René in sight of the woods of the Natchez; and as he approached them he could not help discovering something unusual, He saw a cloud of smoke issuing from them which he at first took for the fires of the huts; he was still at a considerable distance from them, and he

hastened onward. The sun was setting among stormy clouds foretelling a murky night. It was that of the massacre which then darkened the earth. René took a circuitous route, in order to reach his own hut through the valley The river which ran through it had swelled, and it it was with difficulty that he could cross it: he thus lost two hours of a night whose every minute was an age. As he began to ascend the hill on the side of which his hut was built, a man approached him in the darkness, as if to recognize him, and suddenly disappeared.

The brother of Amelia was now not more than a bow-shot from his dwelling, from which a feeble light, escaping through the half-opened door, sketched the outline on the dark grass. No sound came from his solitary abode. René hesitated about entering: he paused at every step; he was tempted, he knew not why, to return, to hide himself in the wood, and to await the return of morning.

René felt himself no longer the master of his actions: an irresistible force bent him to the will of Providence: and, urged on almost against his resolution, he walked up to the threshold which he dreaded to cross, and cast a glance into the hut.

Celuta was on her knees: her head was sunk upon her bosom; her hair was hanging down over her forehead, her hands were clasped, and she seemed in the most humble and impassioned attitude of prayer. A little torch, which had burned so long that its light had become obscured, blazed in a corner of the hearth. The favourite dog of René, stretched before the fire, perceived his master, and gave signs of joy: but he arose not, as if he had feared to hasten a fatal moment. The daughter of René, suspended in her cradle from one of the carved beams of the hut, uttered from time to time a slight moan, which Celuta, absorbed in her grief, heard not.

René, as he stood on the threshold, contemplated in silence this sad and touching spectacle: he guessed that the prayers which Celuta was addressing to Heaven were for him: his heart was filled with intense gratitude, and his eyes, the springs of which a burning grief had long dried up, now discharged a torrent of delicious tears. He exclaimed, "Celuta! my Celuta!" as he flew to the unhappy spouse, whom he raised up, and clasped ardently in his arms. Celuta would have spoken: but love, terror, and despair, all prevented her: she made violent efforts to find words: her arms moved convulsively, her lips trembled: at length a shrill cry burst from her bosom, and restored to her the power of speech. "Save him! O save him! blessed and charitable Spirits—take him with you into your abode!"

Celuta threw her arms round her husband, and pressing him to her bosom, seemed as if she would hidden him there.

René lavished on his wife unaccustomed caresses. "What is the matter, my Celuta?" said he, "be of good cheer. I am come to protect and to defend thee."

Celuta, looking towards the door, cried out, "They come!" and she placed herself before René, as if to shield him: "Barbarians, your blows shall only reach him through my heart!"

"My Celuta," said René, "there is no one near. What troubles thee thus?"

Celuta stamped on the ground. "Fly, fly," she cried, "or thou art lost! No—come and hide thyself under the skins of my bed; assume the dress of a woman." Then the desolate spouse, taking off her vestments, would have attired her husband in them.

"Celuta," said he, "resume thy reason. No danger threatens me."

"No danger!" cried Celuta, interrupting him: "is it not I who have slain thee? have not I hastened thy death? is it not thy spouse

who hath fixed the day by removing the rushes! . . . A secret . . . . Oh my country!"

"A secret!" replied René. "I have not told it thee!" cried Celuta. "Oh lose not this one moment—all that is left of thine existence. Let us fly together—plunge thyself with me into the river!"

Celuta fell on her knees before René: she kissed the dust of his feet, and conjured him by his daughter only to withdraw and to hide himself for a few hours. "At sunrise," said she, "thou wilt be in safety: Outougamiz will be here, and then thou wilt know what I dare not tell thee now!"

"If my absence," said René, "will cure thy grief, I will withdraw: hereafter thou wilt explain to me this mystery, which now I regard only as the effect of reason disturbed by fever."

Celuta, enchanted, flew to the cradle of her daughter, whom she offered to her father's

kiss, and then urged René to leave the hut. René was about to quit it when the sound of arms was heard without. René turned round —when a hatchet, thrown violently, struck his forehead and sunk there, as the wedge into the oak—as the iron which mutilates some antique statue, the image of some God, and a master-piece of art. René fell on the floor of his hut—René was no more!

Ondouré made his accomplices retire: he was alone with Celuta, who had fainted by the bleeding body of René. Ondouré laughed like a fiend. By the light of the expiring torch, he cast his looks from one victim to the other. From time to time he trampled under his feet the corpse of his rival, or pierced it with his poniard. He partly uncovered the body of Celuta, and admired her beauty. He did more——then extinguishing the flambeau, he proceeded to other murders, after closing the door of the hut which had witnessed his double crime.

Happy, happy had Celuta been, had she never more opened her eyes to the light! But God willed it not. The spouse of René came again to life soon after Ondouré had retired. At first she stretched forth her hands, and unconsciously dabbled them in the blood that flowed around her. She then sat upright, shook her head, as if to recall memory, as if to enable her to divine who, and where she was. Providence had kindly ordained that the Indian should not possess her reason: she had but a confused idea of some frightful event—she knew not what. She crossed her arms, and looked around her through the darkness of the hut. The silence of death was only interrupted from time to time by the howling of the dog. Celuta in vain attempted to murmur a few words.

At this moment she fancied she saw Tabamica her mother. The breasts which nourished Celuta had disappeared: her lips were gone, and only left the naked teeth: she was

noseless and eyeless: and with a bony hand Tabamica seemed to press entrails which no longer existed. Celuta would have advanced towards her mother: she rose, fell down again on her knees, and crawled along the floor of the hut: her vestments half removed, felt as if they were heavy and wet. She reached the body of René, and, overcome with her efforts, sat down unconsciously upon it: she felt herself weary, the body seemed like a couch, and she reposed there.

In a little time the door of the hut half opened and a voice said softly, "Art thou there?" Celuta, recalled by that voice to a demi-existence, replied, "Yes, I am here!"

"Ah!" said Mila, "is he returned?"

"Who?" asked Celuta. "René," replied Mila.

"I have not seen him," said Celuta.

"And I have not found him," said Mila, still in a low tone, "the assassins then have not yet made their appearance? thy husband

is not yet come? he is then in safety!" Celuta replied not.

"Why," said Mila, "hast thou no light? I am afraid, and dare not enter." Celuta replied, that she knew not why she had no light in the hut.

"How strange the tone of thy voice is," cried Mila, "art thou ill? The hut smells of blood: stay, I will come to thee."

Mila crossed the threshold, and shut the door. "What hast thou spread upon the mats?" said she as she walked forward in the dark: "my feet adhere to the ground. Where art thou? Give me thy hand."

"Here," said Celuta, "I can advance no farther," replied Mila; "I feel faint."

The door of the hut again opened, and the voice of Outougamiz was heard calling on Celuta. "It is Outougamiz," cried Mila; "God be praised! we are now in safety." "Who speaks?" cried Outougamiz, seized with terror; "is it not the voice of Mila

that I hear? Dear phantom, art thou come to save René?"

"Yes," replied Mila; "but come hither quickly, Celuta is not well."

Outougamiz, believing it was the shade of Mila that spoke to him, entered the cabin trembling. "Give me thy hand," said Mila; "place it on my heart, thou wilt then find that I am no spectre. I have been shut up till now in a cavern, but I have escaped."

Mila took the hand of Outougamiz in the darkness, and placed it on her heart.

"It feels like life," said Outougamiz, "yet I know that thou art dead; but I thank thee for returning to life to save René. Celuta, speak to me!"

"Did some one call me?" said Celuta.

"Repliest thou to me from the depths of the grave?" cried Outougamiz, struck with the sepulchral tone in which his sister spoke:

"I smell carnage; there is blood under my feet!"

"Blood!" exclaimed Mila; "light a torch!"

"Spectre," replied Outougamiz, "lend me then the torch of death!"

Outougamiz advanced to the hearth, and, groping in the darkness, laid his hands on some moss and two flints. He lighted the moss, and a vivid gleam shot up. Three cries of horror burst at once from Celuta, Mila, and Outougamiz.

The scene which now presented itself was terrific in the extreme. The hut was inundated with blood: some of its furniture had been overturned by the last convulsions of René; the domestic animals had mounted on the chairs and tables to shun the blood; Celuta was seated on the body of René, and wore the marks of two crimes which would have made the sun grow pale; Mila stood erect, her eyes almost starting from their or-

bits: and Outougamiz with his forehead furrowed as if scathed by lightning!

Mila first broke silence; she threw herself on the body of René, clasped it in her arms, and pressed it with her lips.

"All is then over!" cried she. "Oh my deliverer, is it thus that I meet thee! Cowardly friends, weak hearts, it is you who have assassinated him with your unworthy suspicions, your eternal irresolutions! Now congratulate thyself, Outougamiz, with having kept thy secret. But canst thou re-animate that bosom which beat for thee with so holy a friendship? Oh thou art a sublime warrior! I acknowledge thy virtue; but approach me never! I would prefer to thy embraces even those of the monster whose works of iniquity thou seest in this hut!"

Despair had distracted the young Indian, who had been first the lover and then the friend of René. Outougamiz listened to her, mute as a sepulchre. Then suddenly he

spoke: "Hence! execrable phantom, horrible shade, hungry shadow that wouldst devour my friend!"

"Thy friend!" cried Mila, raising her head: "dost thou dare to call thyself the friend of René? Oughtest thou not rather, like that woman without love, now fainting on that bloody bed, oughtest thou not, like her to implore the earth to swallow thee up? I alone loved René! In vain thou wouldst feign to believe me a phantom; I live, I have escaped from that cavern where I was buried by the wretches whose designs I wished to reveal. Hast thou ever believed thyself bound to secrecy? Couldst thou imagine that freedom would have been the fruit of crime?"

Here Celuta seemed to return to life; her eyes opened, and she rose up; her ideas grew clearer; she remembered her misfortunes; she recognized Mila and Outougamiz, and the mortal remains of the most unfortu-

nate of men. Grief gave her strength, and she cried out: "It is I who have slain him!"

"Yes, it was thyself," cried Mila, whom despair had rendered cruel.

"René," said Celuta, in the most impassioned tone, addressing the corpse of her husband, "I wished to have told thee before I died, that my soul adored thee as it adores the Great Spirit; that thy letter had made no change in my heart; that I revered thee as the light of morning: that I deemed thee as innocent as the babe that has but smiled on its mother."

"Why then," said Mila, "didst thou keep the secret? Why didst thou not acquaint the French with it, since thou couldst not tell it to thy absent husband?"

Mila sobbed, and her tears fell in showers thick as the rain of the storm.

The brother of Celuta then approached respectfully the body of his friend. "Mila

says that thou wert not guilty. Happy for thee! thou couldst then die!"

In spite of her despair, Mila understood his meaning, and she extended her hand to the young savage.

Outougamiz continued: "I told them I loved not — that I was a bad friend — that I should slay thee. Yet I came from the subterranean lake to save thee: I sought thee every where: the warriors who pretended to have seen thee deceived me: I am simple, I am ever deceived. Thou art dead—I will die too: but before I die .... I will, however, wait until my country needs him no more, for now my native land wants defenders."

At this moment Celuta was seized with convulsions. A stream of cold perspiration ran down her foreheed: she tried to strangle herself, rolled from side to side, and uttered a sort of bellowing noise. Mila and Outougamiz flew to her assistance. Celuta gazed

on them, and pressing her side, she said, "Know ye what it is? Has death done me violence?"

Mila uttered a shriek: she divined what was meant: Outougamiz, who knew not yet the horrible truth, would again have spoken: "Thou knowest not what it is," said Mila, interrupting him: "the sight of thy friend's dead body is a delicious spectacle compared to what I fear!"

Day was beginning to break: and discharges of cannon were heard from the fort: the kinswomen of Chactas came to the hut of René to congratulate Celuta on the absence of her husband—and they witnessed the frightful scene.

"Women," said Outougamiz, "there is combat abroad: I owe my blood to my country, however guilty its sons may be. I leave in your hands all that is dearest to me in this world: my wife, who is not dead, as has been said, my wretched sister, and the remains of my friend. I will speedily return." He

went forth, and proceeded towards the spot whither the sound of arms called him.

The women lifted up Mila and Celuta, whom they placed in each other's arms upon a bed of foliage, leaving the body of René in the hut, which they closed. They bore the two friends to the former abode of Chactas, and lavished on them the tenderest cares: it would have been kinder to have allowed them to die.

All the colonists among the Natchez perished: only seventeen persons escaped. Among the wounded soldiers who were saved, was Jacques the grenadier. The fort was scaled in the night, and the sentinels butchered before it was known that the Indians were in arms. Through the imprudence of the commandant, the garrison scarcely consisted of one hundred men, all the rest being dispersed through the different posts along the river. Chepar, who had always refused to believe in the conspiracy, ran

out on hearing the noise on the ramparts, and fell beneath the hatchet of Adario. Febriano, who was met by Ondouré, received his death from the hands of the savage who had been his corruptor and accomplice. The French, except in one house, made no resistance. Adario, who commanded the attack, was killed: he expired full of exultation, thinking he had delivered his country and avenged his children. The cannon-shots heard by Outougamiz had been fired as signals of victory by the Indians themselves after they had taken the fort.

The brother of Celuta, finding his aid useless, returned to the hut of René, and seated himself by the body of the white warrior. With an air of mystery he bent over one of his friend's wounds, as if through it he would have looked into René's bosom. Clasping his hands admiringly, the madman uttered some words of passionate tenderness. He then took a little stone vase

from the table, and gathered up the blood of René, which he warmed with his own, after opening a vein. He dipped the golden Manitou in the philtre of friendship, and again put the chain round his neck.

The rage of Ondouré was appeased, but not his passion. On quitting one of his frightful orgies, intoxicated with wine, success, ambition, and love, he determined to revisit Celuta. In all the pomp of murder and debauchery he proceeded to the sanctuary of grief: but his crimes went thither with him, as the executioners accompany the criminal. The bursts of laughter which broke from the guardian of the Sun and his satellites were heard afar off.

Ondouré reached the hut: he had ordered his friends to keep at a distance, for he had his own designs. He recoiled some paces, when, instead of Celuta, he saw Outougamiz: but soon recovering himself, he said, "What dost thou here?"

"I was waiting for thee: I was certain that thou wouldst come hither with thy friends to celebrate the feast of the prisoner of war. Bringest thou the cauldron of blood? White flesh is delicious! But devour not all—I only ask for the heart of my friend."

"Thou shalt have it," replied the ferocious Ondouré, "we have reserved it for thee."

Fresh peals of laughter accompanied these words.

"But say," continued Ondouré, whom the vapours of wine had thrown off his guard, "where is thy sister? How faithful she was last night to her handsome white warrior! She hates me no longer—she has even forgiven me for my love of Akansie. Come to me, my charming dove: where art thou? wilt thou grant me a second interview?" and Ondouré entered the hut.

Outougamiz rose, leaning on a fowling-pieca which René had given him; "Illustrious chief," he said, suddenly changing his

countenance and tone, "are all our enemies dead?"

"Canst thou doubt it?" exclaimed Ondouré.

"Well then," said Outougamiz, "my country is saved: she has no more need of defenders! Is all arranged for her future welfare? Canst thou now, warrior, rest in peace?"

"Yes, my dear Outougamiz," replied the guardian of the Sun, who was unable to comprehend either his danger or the magnanimity of the question, "Yes, I could repose for a hundred winters on the mat of pleasure with thy sister."

The body of René separated Ondouré from Outougamiz. "This night," said the latter, "has been fatiguing to thee, Ondouré: therefore go to thy rest, since thy arm is no longer necessary to thy country. I will give thee back thy hatchet."

Outougamiz lifted up the hatchet with

which the guardian of the Sun had killed René. Ondouré stretched out his hand to receive it. "Not so," said Outougamiz, as, lifting the hatchet with both hands, he split with a single blow the head of the monster, who sunk upon the body of René, without even uttering a blasphemy. Outougamiz then left the hut, and presenting his gun at the satellites of Ondouré, exclaimed in that tone which from the lips of a good man is so appalling to the wicked: "Fly, impure brood, lest I immolate you with your master!" The wretches, who saw a troop of warriors, friends of the brother of Celuta advancing, betook themselves to flight.

The warriors on their arrival deplored the horrors they witnessed. "I will return hither soon," said Outougamiz, "but I must hasten to tell my sister and Mila what the Manitou of gold has done."

Celuta heard not her brother's story: every instant those around expected her to

expire. Mila heard of Ondouré's death with indifference: "long ago," said she, "that thou shouldst have given that carrion to the dogs."

On the following night Outougamiz returned to carry away the sacred remains of René: he bore them on his shoulders to the foot of the hill, and dug in a remote spot a grave which he refused to point out: and there he deposited the body of him who in his life had constantly sought solitude. "I know," he said, as he withdrew, "that I have been a false friend: it is I who have slain thee: but wait till I join thee, and in the land of souls all shall be explained."

The brother of Celuta had now no more to do with life: but he wished to be assured before quitting it, that his sister had no longer need of him, and that Mila required no protector.

Already had the moon thrice run her course since the tragic catastrophe, and Ce-

luta, apparently ready every moment to heave her last sigh, seemed yet at times to revive. The cup of divine wrath was not yet exhausted: the evil genius of René still pursued Celuta, like those nocturnal phantoms that live upon the blood of mortals. She, however, refused all kinds of nourishment: and her cruel friends were obliged to force her to preserve life by means of a little water. Her body, once a model of grace and beauty, was now but a skeleton, like a young poplar which has died on its stem. The long eyelashes of Celuta could scarcely rise sufficiently to disclose her eyes, which were extinguished by her tears. When the unfortunate widow was restored to reason for a space, she was dumb: when she sunk into the madness of grief, she shrieked aloud. She would then make strong efforts, as if to drive away two spectres that at once wished to devour her — Ondouré and the brother of Amelia: she beheld also a woman unknown

to her, who smiled upon her with a look of pity from the heavens.

The courageous Mila would have been ashamed of her own griefs while she witnessed those of her friend: she passed her days by her sister's side, watching her sufferings, smoothing her couch, and being as a mother to the daughter of René. The tender orphan was already beautiful, though her beauty was of a serious cast: as she lay in Mila's lap, she looked like a white dove, under the wing of the most brilliant bird of the American forests.

From time to time Outougamiz came to see his wife and sister; he sat by Celuta's couch, took her hand, or dandled Amelia on his knees. He would then rise, replace the infant in Mila's arms, and withdraw in silence. The young man was wasting away; every day his forehead became paler and his air more languid; he neither spoke of Celuta, nor René, nor Mila. Every evening he looked at

the little urn in which was the blood of René, and it was remarked with surprise that the blood did not dry. Outougamiz hung about the urn the golden Manitou, which he no longer wore.

One evening he came to pay his accustomed visit to his sister. Mila, and several Indian women were around the bed of tribulation, when suddenly, to the astonishment of all, Celuta raised herself, and sat on her couch. No one had ever before seen her wear the air she now wore: her beauty and grief were superhuman. She first dropped her head upon her bosom, and then raising her pale forehead, which a slight flush passed over, she said, in a firm voice, "I want something to eat."

These words surprised Outougamiz: they were the first that Celuta had uttered since the night of her misfortunes, and she had constantly refused all food. Thinking that she had awakened from her despair, and resolved to live, the matrons uttered a cry of

joy, and hastened to bring her fresh maize. But Mila, looking at Celuta, said, "Thou wouldst have something to eat?"

"Yes," replied Celuta, looking at her sister, "I must now live."

Mila raised her hands to Heaven, and cried, "O virtuous creature!"

Even Outougamiz, breaking his self-imposed silence, said, "What is this?"

"Pay adoration," replied Mila, "she whom thou seest is no woman; she is the spouse of a Spirit."

"Wherefore deceive him?" said Celuta. "My friend," turning towards her brother, "my destiny is not yet completed," added she, "I have just discovered in my bosom a phantom begotten of Death." Outougamiz fled.

Celuta was a mother. She resigned herself to life—that last degree of virtue and misfortune to which a daughter of Adam can arrive. But nature cannot rise thus above it-

self without suffering in its very source; the next morning the face of the widow of René was black as ebony—her hair white as a swan. A few suns removed the shade from Celuta's brow, but not the old age of adversity from her locks.

When Captain Artaguette heard of the catastrophe perpetrated by the Natchez, the murder of René, and the misfortunes of Celuta, his heart was wrung: he had been nobly attached to the brother of Amelia: he had cherished in secret a tender passion for the woman who had preserved his life, and given him the sweet name of brother. Recalled to New Orleans, he wept with Adelaide, Harlay, Jacques the grenadier, and his aged mother. Outougamiz had concealed the grave of René: but Artaguette caused mass to be said for him, and implored God to remember him who had desired to be forgotten of men.

In the mean time troops assembled from all

parts to chastise the Indians. The eight reeds which had been withdrawn had caused the failure of the plot among all the other nations except the Yazous, by whom Father Souël had been massacred. The French army arrived at Fort Rosalie. Though divided among themselves, the Natchez defended themselves courageously, and Outougamiz, who could scarcely support the weight of his arms, displayed anew his valour. But at length the Indians were obliged to yield to superior force and quit their country.

One night the Natchez disinterred the bones of their fathers, and carrying them on their shoulders, while the old men, women, and children, were placed amid the young warriors, they proceeded towards the desert, without knowing where they were to find an asylum. Captain Artaguette was with that division of the troops which was charged to attack the Chickasaws; he performed a retreat

highly honourable to him; but in which he and his faithful grenadier lost their lives. As he did not perish, however, till he had saved the troops under his command, it was generally believed that he had sought death. Adelaide and Harlay quitted America, and the mother of Jacques died of old age.

The small remnant of the Natchez had already removed far into the wilderness. Outougamiz expired five moons after quitting his native soil. It was then known that every night he had opened his veins in order to refresh the urn of blood: his blood was exhausted before his friendship. He manifested excessive joy in dying, leaving as a heritage (it was all he possessed) the vase of blood and the golden Manitou to the daughter of René. He was interred, like his friend, under an unknown tree.

A few days after his death, Celuta brought into the world a daughter; she closed her

eyes as she placed it on her bosom, and when she had suckled it, she placed it behind her. She persisted in thus acting towards the child, so that she never beheld the infant—to whom she never gave any other name than "The Phantom."

Mila, now also become a widow, constantly bore in her arms the daughter of René, whom Celuta refused to touch after becoming the mother of another child, lest she should sully it. Celuta never pressed that other child to her bosom without suffering convulsions. Her maternal love asked for kisses which her conjugal love refused: and in the cries of innocence Celuta heard the voice of crime. Sometimes the spouse of René was ready to tear her child to pieces; but a stronger sentiment, maternal love, withheld her hands. Who may paint such combats of passions, such tortures of the heart?

Mila was the admiration of all the exiles. Though scarcely seventeen springs had passed

over her, she displayed a courage and wisdom that were quite extraordinary. She lived but for Celuta: she provided her couch, her vestments, her food: she had become the mother of the daughter of René. Her liveliness of manner had never changed; but she was more silent, and spoke but by signs and smiles.

The Natchez at length found a hospitable shelter among a tribe once allied to their own. An exile, beginning the dance of the supplicant, offered the calumet of the banished: it was accepted. An infant brought in exchange a calabash full of maple juice and crowned with flowers. Then were the tents of their country pitched on a foreign soil, and the bones of their fathers deposited in this new home.

As a first benefit of Heaven, the second daughter of Celuta died. The phantom sunk again into eternal night. No mother went to shed her milk over the funeral turf: Celuta

would have fulfilled this pious duty, had she not dreaded that the phantom would re-enter her bosom with the perfume of the flowers. The daughter of René had found a home: the daughter of Ondouré had returned to the earth: it was easily seen that Celuta no longer thought herself obliged to live, and that Mila would never quit her friend.

One evening when the exiles were taking their repast, at the entrance of their tents, Celuta quitted her's. She was attired in a robe of feathers and skins sewed together, the work of Mila's ingenious hands: and her white hair floated in ringlets on her youthful head, on which was a wreath of blue-flowing bramble: she carried in her arms the daughter of René, and Mila, half naked, followed her companion. The exiles, surprised and charmed to see them, rose, loaded them with benedictions, and formed themselves into a procession. They arrived in this order by the side

of a cataract, the roaring of which was heard afar off. This cataract, which no traveller had ever visited, fell between two mountains into an abyss: Celuta kissed her daughter, laid her on the grass, and placed on the infant's lap the golden Manitou and the urn in which the blood had dried. Mila and Celuta, holding each other by the hand, approached the edge of the cataract as if to look into its waters—and quicker than the torrent's fall, they accomplished their destiny. Celuta remembered that René, in his letter, regretted that he had not thrown himself into the foaming waves.

The women took in their arms the daughter of René, who had been left on the bank; they carried her to the oldest of the Sachems, who confided her to the care of a famous matron. The matron hung at the infant's bosom, as an ornament, the golden Manitou. Her French name of Amelia being unknown to the Savages, the Sachems gave her ano-

ther: and thus even the name of the orphan perished.

When the daughter of Celuta had attained her sixteenth year, she heard the story of her family. For the rest of her brief existence she was sad. She herself had, by a loveless marriage, a daughter yet more unfortunate than her mother. The Indians among whom the Natchez had settled, almost all perished in a war with the Iroquois, and the last children of the nation of the Sun went to perish in a second exile among the forests of Niagara.

There are some families whom fate seems to delight in persecuting: but let us not accuse Providence. The life and the death of René were pursued by illegitimate flames which gave heaven to Amelia, and hell to Ondouré. René suffered the double chastisement of these two criminal passions. No one can produce disorder in

others without having some principle of disorder in himself: and he who even involuntarily is the cause of misfortune or of crime, is never innocent in the sight of God.

May my narrative, which here closes, have flowed along like thy waves, O Meschacebé!

END OF THE NATCHEZ.

ATALA.

ATALA.

THE NARRATIVE OF CHACTAS.

Referred to in vol. I. p. 114.

The fate is passing strange, my dear son, which has brought us together in these wilds. In you I behold the civilized man who has voluntarily become a Savage: in me you see the Savage whom the Great Spirit (I know not for what purpose) meant to civilize. We have both entered upon the career of life by opposite roads; thou hast come to repose in my place as I have sat in thine: thus we have both seen things in points of view totally different. Which of us has lost or gained by the exchange of positions? This is only known to the Spirits, the least of whom has more wisdom than all the children of men.

In the next month of flowers,* seven times ten and three winters will have been numbered since my mother brought me into this world, on the banks of the Meschacebé.† The Spaniards had been for some time established in the bay of Pensacola, but no White as yet inhabited Louisiana.‡ I had scarcely counted seventeen

* May. † Mississippi. ‡ The country of the Natchez.

falls of the leaf, when I marched with my father, the warrior Outalissi, against the Muscogulges, a powerful nation of Florida. We joined with our allies, the Spaniards, and the combat took place on one of the branches of the Maubile. Areskoui* and the Manitous were unpropitious. Our enemies triumphed: my father lost his life: I was twice wounded in defending him. Oh why did I not then descend to the land of souls! I should have avoided all the evils that awaited me on the earth. The Spirits ordained it otherwise: and I was hurried away among the fugitives to Saint Augustin.

In that village, then newly built by the Spaniards, I ran the risk of being condemned to labour in the mines of Mexico, when an aged Castilian, named Lopez, pitying my youth and innocence, took me under his protection, and introduced me to his sister, the companion of his domestic hours; for Lopez was unmarried.

These amiable persons conceived for me the most tender affection; they superintended my education with the utmost attention, and provided me with masters of all kinds. But after spending thirty months at Saint Augustine, I was seized with such a disgust to social life that I felt myself gradually wasting away. Retired from human eyes, sometimes I would stand motionless for hours together contemplating the

* The Indian God of War.

undulating tops of the distant forests; sometimes seated upon the margin of a rivulet, I would pore in pensive silence on the stream as it wandered by, while fancy, shadowing forth the woods and wilds through which it had passed, disposed my soul wholly to solitude.

At last, no longer able to restrain my desire of returning to the desert, I presented myself one morning to Lopez, attired in my original savage dress, my bow and arrows in one hand, and my European garments in the other; the latter I returned to my generous protector, and casting myself at his feet, bathed them with my tears, loaded myself with reproaches, and exclaimed against my own ingratitude. "Yet, O my father!" said I, "seest thou not that I shall pine away and die unless I resume the wandering life of an Indian?" Lopez, thunderstruck, endeavoured to combat my resolution; representing to me the danger to which I should again be exposed of falling into the hands of the Muscogulges. Perceiving, however, that I was firmly resolved, he wept and tenderly embraced me. "Go," said he, "child of nature! go, and again enjoy that precious independence of which Lopez would not deprive thee. Were I younger, I would myself accompany thee to the desert (fraught with so many pleasing recollections), and restore thee to thy mother's arms. When thou findest thyself once more in the

wilderness, call sometimes to mind the old Spaniard who gave thee hospitality, and, to excite thee to the love of thy fellow-creatures, never forget that the first trial which thou hast made of the human heart has been entirely in its favour." Lopez concluded with a prayer to the God of the Christians, whose worship I had refused to embrace, and we parted with tears.

It was not long before I received the chastisement of my ingratitude. Having, from inexperience, lost myself in the woods, I was taken prisoner by a party of Muscogulges and Siminoles, as Lopez had predicted. By my dress, and by the feathers which adorned my head, they discovered that I belonged to the Natchez, and immediately bound me, though but slightly, on account of my youth. Simaghan, the chief of the troop, demanded my name. "I am Chactas," replied I, "the son of Outalissi, son of Miscou, who have scalped more than a hundred Muscogulge heroes." "Chactas, son of Outalissi, son of Miscou," said Simaghan, "rejoice; thou shalt be burnt at the great village." "Be it so," rejoined I, and began my death-song.

Though a prisoner, I could not refrain, for some days, from admiring my enemies. The Muscogulge, and more especially the Siminole, his ally, is all gaiety, good-humour, and content. Light and easy in his carriage, frank and unem-

barrassed in his deportment, he talks with great volubility, his language is harmonious and flowing. Even the aged among them still retain this artless simplicity, and, like the older birds of the desert, mingle their accents with the new melodies of their posterity.

The women who accompanied the tribe, pitied my tender years, and, amiably inquisitive, asked a thousand questions respecting my mother and the days of my childhood. They asked if my cradle of moss had been suspended from the flowery branches of the maple-tree, and if the gentle breezes had rocked me to sleep amid the nests of the birds. They were solicitous to learn the state of my heart; they asked whether I had ever seen the white deer in my dreams, and whether the trees of the secret valley had ever inspired me with the passion of love. Matrons, wives, and daughters were all answered with *naïveté*. "Ye are the delight of the day," said I, "and the night loves you better than the refreshing dew. Man issues from your bosoms only to be fondled in your arms, and to hang upon your lips: ye are acquainted with those magic words which can lull corroding grief to rest. This was I taught by her who gave me birth, but whom, alas, I shall see no more! she likewise told me that virgins are like those mysterious flowers that are found only in solitary places."

My praises were highly gratifying to the women, who loaded me with all sorts of presents. They brought me the cream of walnuts, the juice of the maple-tree, sagamité, the hams of bears, the skins of beavers, shells to adorn me, and moss to lie down upon; they sang, they laughed with me, and then burst into tears, when they recollected that I was doomed to the stake.

One night, when the Muscogulges had encamped in a wood, I was sitting before a fire which had been made in the forest, attended by the warrior who acted as my keeper, and I heard the rustling of female attire; suddenly a woman half-veiled came and sat down beside me. Tears overflowed her eye-lids, and a little crucifix of gold glittered on her bosom. Her beauty was of the most regular character; and her countenance displayed an inexpressible sentiment of virtue and of feeling, which was irresistibly attractive. She possessed the most fascinating graces, and her looks expressed exquisite sensibility, combined with profound melancholy. Her smile was celestial.

I fancied her the Virgin of the last Love; that virgin who is sent to the prisoner of war, to enchant even the horrors of his approaching fate. In this persuasion, with a faltering voice, and with a perturbation which did not, however, proceed from a dread of the funeral pile, I said

to her: "Virgin, thou art worthy of the first love, and never couldst have been designed for the last. The palpitations of a heart which will soon be motionless but ill correspond with such as thine. Why should death be blended with life? alas! thou makest me too much regret the light I must shortly abandon. Oh, may some happier swain than I long possess thee, and may the ivy and the oak be folded in eternal embraces!"

Then she spoke: "I am not," said she, "the Virgin of the last Love.—Art thou a Christian?" I answered that I had never renounced the Spirits of my native abode. At these words she involuntarily started, and said, "I pity thy fate, alas! that thou shouldst be nothing more than a miserable idolater! my mother instructed me in Christianity; my name is Atala, daughter of Simaghan of the golden bracelets, and chief of the warriors of this troop. We are now proceeding to Apalachucla, where thou art to be burnt." As she uttered these words, Atala rose and withdrew.

Chactas was here obliged to interrupt his story. A crowd of past recollections overwhelmed his feelings, and streams of tears flowed from his sightless eyes, over his wrinkled cheeks; as two springs, concealed in the bosom of the earth, manifest their existence by the water which drips through the crevices of rock.

O my son! he at length resumed, thou seest how little firmness Chactas possesses, though famed for his wisdom. Ah! my dear child! man no sooner opens his eyes to the light of heaven than his tears begin to flow, and, though deprived of sight, still can he weep. For several successive nights the daughter of Simaghan came and conversed with me. Sleep forsook my eyes, and Atala mingled in my heart with the remembrance of the couch of my fathers!

On the seventeenth day of our march, about the hour when the mist rises from the waters, we entered the great savannah of Alachua. It is surrounded by hills, which, rising one behind another, and reaching to the clouds, form an immense amphitheatre of forests, diversified by gum-trees, limes, pale oaks, and magnolias. The chief gave a shout which signified our arrival at the place of destination, and the troop encamped at the foot of the hills. They removed me to a little distance, near the brink of one of those natural wells, so well known in Florida. I was tied to the trunk of a tree, and a warrior, impatient of his task, kept watch over me. I had been here but a short time when Atala appeared under the trees which grew near the fountain, and, turning towards the Muscogulge hero, said to him, "Hunter, if you would pursue the mountain goat, I will guard your prisoner." At this proposal of the chief's daughter the warrior

leaped for joy, and, hastily descending from the hill, soon disappeared.

How strange are the inconsistencies of the human heart! I, who had so ardently desired to reveal my secret thoughts to her whom I loved better than the light of day, at that instant, abashed and confounded, would rather have yielded myself a prey to the crocodiles of the river, than have found myself alone with Atala. My fair keeper was as discomposed as her prisoner; the Spirit of love had deprived us both of the power of speech. At last the daughter of the warlike Simaghan, forcing herself to speak, said, "Warrior, you are but slightly bound, you may easily escape." At these words, my tongue resuming its functions, I exclaimed: "Slightly bound! O woman ——" I could not proceed. Atala hesitated for a few moments, but at last— "Flee!" cried she, "and save yourself;" and she unbound me from the tree. I took the cord and placed it in the hands of Atala.—"Take it again! take it again!" exclaimed I. "Are you mad?" said Atala, with great emotion. "Unhappy youth; dost thou not know thou art to be burnt? to what dost thou aspire? Art thou not aware that I am the daughter of a terrible Sachem?" "Alas! there was a time," replied I, much affected, "when my mother carried me at her back in a beaver's skin, when my father possessed a fair hut, and his flocks drank the

waters of a thousand rivulets. But now, alas! I wander without a home or a country, and when I breathe my last, I shall have no friend to throw a blade of grass upon my body, to preserve it from the insects; the remains of an unfortunate stranger will never excite the compassion of any bosom!"

My words deeply affected Atala, and her tears fell in torrents.—"Ah!" resumed I, with energy, "if your heart but spoke like mine. Does not the desert offer us freedom? Will not the verdant recesses of the forests afford us concealment? Do children reared in huts need abundance to make them happy?—O damsel, more lovely than the first dream of the bridegroom! O my beloved, dare to follow my footsteps." "My young friend," replied Atala in a plaintive accent, "you have learned the language of the polished white man, and an Indian female is easily deceived." "How!" exclaimed I, "do you call me your friend? Ah, if a poor slave ———." "Be it so then," said she, falling on my bosom, "a poor slave ——." Filled with inexpressible ardour, I interrupted her. "Let but a single kiss assure me of thy truth!" —Atala granted my request, and I hung upon the lips of my beloved, as the fawn upon the mountain's ridge seems to cling to the tender herbs which he seizes with his delicate tongue.

Alas! my dear son, pain and pleasure are nearly allied! Who would have believed, that the moment in which Atala gave me the first token of her affection would prove destructive to my fondest hopes?—What was my dismay on hearing the daughter of the desert utter these words: "Amiable prisoner, I have madly yielded to thy wish; but whither will this recent passion lead us? My religion must for ever separate us———. O my mother! what hast thou done?———" Here Atala suddenly stopped, and I perceived that some fatal secret had nearly escaped her lips. Her words plunged me into a state of desperation as violent as my hopes had been sanguine. "Well then," said I, "I will imitate thy cruelty; I will not fly. Thou shalt behold me enveloped in the flames of the pile, and listen with rapture to my expiring groan." Atala grasped my hands between her own, and exclaimed: "Poor youthful idolater; thou excitest my tenderest compassion. Dost thou wish to rend my heart with grief? Ah! how I regret that I cannot flee with thee! Cursed was the womb that bore thee, O Atala! Why dost thou not abandon thyself a prey to the crocodile of the stream?"

At this momen the crocodiles, as usual at sun-set, began to utter their cries. "Let us leave this gloomy cavern," said Atala, and the daughter of Simaghan permitted me to conduct

her to the skirts of the mountains, whose verdant sides irregularly projecting into the plain below, appeared like the sea-shore, indented with bays and promontories. All was tranquil, magnificent, and melancholy in the desert. The stork screamed in his nest, the woods resounded with the quail's monotonous cry, the parrot's jargon, the bellowing of the buffalo, and the neighing of the Siminole mares.

We walked together almost in silence. I walked by the side of Atala, who held one end of the cord which I had obliged her to take. At one time we shed tears, at another endeavoured to smile; with eyes now raised to heaven, now fixed on the ground, we listened to the melody of birds, or enjoyed the sight of the setting sun;—our hands locked in each other,—our bosoms alternately palpitating and composed,—the names of Atala and Chactas sweetly breathed out at intervals——— O, that first walk of love! how powerful must be the remembrance of it, to melt even yet the heart of the aged Chactas, after many years of misfortune.

How incomprehensible is the human heart when agitated by the passions! I had but just forsaken the generous Lopez, and exposed myself to many dangers in order to be free, and the sight of a woman in an instant effected a complete revolution in my mind. Forgetful of my country, of my home, and even of the dreadful

death which was in preparation, I became perfectly indifferent to every thing which was not Atala. Without power to raise myself to the exercise of reason like a man, I had suddenly fallen into a kind of helpless infancy: and so far from being able to encounter the afflictions that assailed me, I almost required some one near me to provide for me the necessaries of life, and to watch my slumbers.

In vain it was that Atala, after having wandered a considerable way along the savannah, cast herself at my feet, and once more urged me to leave her. I protested that I would return alone to the camp, if she refused to bind me again to the foot of the tree. Seeing me thus resolute, she was obliged to comply, and waited a more favourable opportunity for persuading me.

The day following that which had decided the destiny of my life, our troop halted in a valley not far from Cuscowilla, the capital of the Siminoles. These Indians, leagued with the Muscogulges, form the confederacy of the Creeks. The daughter of the land of palms visited me in the dead of the night. She conducted me to a great forest of pines, and there renewed her entreaties to induce me to escape. Without uttering a syllable, I took her hand, and obliged her to accompany me into the forest. The night was delicious. The Spirit of the air

shook his azure hair impregnated with the fragrance of pines, and we enjoyed the delicate scent of amber exhaled by the crocodiles reclined beneath the tamarind-trees of the river. The moon shone in the midst of a blue uncloudec sky, and its gray pearly light fell on the undefined tops of the trees. All nature was profoundly silent, and not a sound was audible, save a distant murmuring in the depth of the wood. You would have fancied that the Spirit of solitude was sighing through the vast extent of the desert.

Through the trees we descried a youth with a torch in his hand, who appeared like the Genius of Spring, traversing the forest to reanimate the face of nature. It was a young lover going to learn his fate at the abode of his beloved. If the damsel quenched the torch, she was to receive his hand; if, on the contrary, she veiled her face without extinguishing it, she rejected his addresses. The warrior, as he wandered through the gloom, sung in an undertone the following words:

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"May Mila quench this torch! may her lips throw a voluptuous shade upon it! I will fertilize her bosom; the hope of our nation shall cling to her breast, and I will smoke the calumet of peace by the cradle of my son.

"O let me outstep the morn o'er the mountain to surprise my solitary dove on a branch in the grove."

Thus sang the young man, and his accents penetrated the inmost recesses of my heart. Atala turned pale. Our hands trembled within each other. But we were soon roused from meditating upon this scene by another not less dangerous to our peace. We were passing the tomb of an infant which served as a boundary between two nations, and was placed, according to custom by the road-side, that the young women who were going to the neighbouring fountain, might as they passed, endeavour to allure to their bosoms the spirit of the innocent creature and restore it to its country. We beheld several young brides, who, anxious to become mothers, were endeavouring, with their lips half-open, to inhale the spirit of the little infant, whom their imagination represented as fluttering among the surrounding foliage. These, however, soon gave way to the real mother, who advanced and hung upon the tomb a sheaf of corn and a garland of flowers. She bedewed

the ground with her milk, and afterwards, reclining on the green turf, thus addressed her infant son in the tenderest accents :

" Why should I weep on thy earthly cradle, O my first born. When the young bird tries his new-fledged wings to seek for food in the desert, he finds many a bitter grain. At least thou hast never known the tears of sorrow, the poisonous breath of men never corrupted thy heart. The rose that is nipped in the bud dies inclosed with all its perfumes like thee, my boy, with all thy innocence! Happy they who die in the cradle! They know nought save the smiles and the kisses of a mother's love."

Already softened by the feelings of our own hearts, we were quite overpowered by the affecting scenes of youthful love and maternal tenderness, which conspired to haunt our footsteps in those enchanting solitudes. I took Atala in my arms, and carried her into the thickest part of the forest, where I addressed her in language which it were now a vain attempt to repeat. The tropical breeze, my son, gradually loses its warmth, as it advances towards the icy regions of the frigid zone, and the memory of love in the heart of an old man, is like the rays of the sun when he is sunk beneath the horizon, reflected from the surface of the moon, when silence is over the huts of the savages.

Could aught save the lovely Atala? What could prevent her from yielding to the impulse of nature? Nothing but a miracle: and that miracle was wrought. The daughter of Sima-

ghan had recourse to the God of the Christians; prostrate on the ground, she addressed herself in fervent prayer to the queen of virgins. O René! at that moment what an exalted idea did I form of that religion, which could thus administer effectual support to two unfortunate beings in a desert place, deprived of all the comforts of life; of that religion which, opposing its authority to the impetuous torrent of the passions, is of itself sufficient to subdue the most ardent inclination, although the secrecy of the woods, the absence of every human being, and the fidelity of darkness, should favour its indulgence. Ah! how divine appeared to me the simple savage, the innocent Atala, when, upon her knees, at the foot of a decayed pine-tree, as before an altar, she offered to her God her supplications for an idolatrous lover. Her eyes raised towards the orb of night, and her cheek sparkling with the tears of piety and love, she appeared like some beauteous immortal! Often did she seem just ready to wing her flight to heaven! Often, methought, I saw descending in the moon-beams, and heard among the branches, those Spirits, whom the God of Christians sends to the hermits of the rocks, when he prepares to take them to himself. I was afflicted by her supernatural beauty; for I feared that Atala had but a short time to pass upon the earth.

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Nevertheless she wept so bitterly, and appeared so deeply distressed, that I was on the point of consenting to leave her, when the shout of death resounded through the forest, and four armed men leaped upon me. Our flight had been discovered, and the chief had sent them in pursuit of us.

Atala, who had the bearing of a queen, disdained to speak to the warriors; but casting on them a contemptuous look returned to Simaghan.

She could not prevail. My guards were doubled, my chains were multiplied, and I was separated from my beloved. Five days afterwards we came in sight of Apalachucla, situated upon the river Chata-Uche. I was immediately crowned with flowers, my face was painted blue and vermilion, pearls were suspended from my nose and ears, and into my hands was put a chichikoué.*

Adorned thus for the sacrifice, I entered Apalachucla, amid the shouts of the multitude. I knew my fate was at hand, when suddenly the sound of a conch was heard, and the Mico, or Chief of the nation, summoned the people to assemble.

You know, my son, what torments the savages inflict upon their prisoners of war. The Christian missionaries, at the peril of their lives, with persevering benevolence, have at length suc-

* A musical instrument in use among the savages.

ceeded in prevailing upon several nations to substitute slavery for the horrors of the funeral pile. The Muscogulges had not as yet adopted that custom, but a numerous party had declared themselves in its favour, and it was to decide upon this important affair, that the chief had convoked the Sachems. I was conducted to the place of deliberation.

Not far from Apalachucla, on a detached island, rose the pavilion of council. Three circular rows of pillars composed the elegant architecture. The pillars were of cypress, ornamentally carved, increasing in height and thickness, and decreasing in number, as they approached the centre, where was placed a column, from the top of which strips of bark were extended over the other pillars, covering the whole pavilion in the manner of an open-work fan.

The council assembled. Fifty old men, in magnificent cloaks of beaver-skins, seated themselves in a kind of gallery, opposite the entrance of the pavilion; the great chief placed himself in the midst of them, and grasped the calumet of peace, half-stained with the colour of war. At the right hand of these aged men were ranged fifty women, clad in apparel made of the plumage of swans. On the left sat the war-chiefs, with their tomahawks in their hands, crests of feathers on their heads, and their arms and bosoms stained with blood. At the foot of the central pil-

had burnt the fire of the council. The chief juggler, surrounded by eight attendants of the temple, in long robes, with a stuffed owl on his head, sprinkled a gummy balsam on the flames, and offered up a sacrifice to the sun. The triple row of elders, of matrons, and of warriors; the priests, the clouds of incense, the sacrifice, all combined to give the ceremony an extraordinary, imposing, and pompous appearance.

I was brought chained, and placed in a standing posture, hand-cuffed, in the midst of the assembly. The sacrifice being finished, the chief addressed the council, concisely explaining the reasons for calling them together, and then cast upon the floor a blue necklace, in testimony of what he had been saying.

Then a Sachem, of the tribe of the Eagle, rose and spoke as follows:

"Venerable Mico, Sachems, Matrons, Warriors of the four tribes of the Eagle, the Beaver, the Serpent, and the Tortoise, let us not abandon the usages of our ancestors; let us burn the prisoner, nor let our valour be enervated. The proposed alteration was suggested by white men, and cannot but prove pernicious. A string of red beads shall declare my sentiments." And he flung the string of red beads into the midst of the assembly. A matron next rose and said:

"Father of the tribe of the Eagle, you have the penetration of the fox and the slow prudence

of the tortoise. I am desirous of strengthening the bonds of amity between us, and in concert will we plant the tree of friendship. But let us change the customs of our forefathers, so far as to divest them of their barbarity. Let us have slaves to cultivate our plains, and let the shrieks of the prisoner no longer affright the infant in the bosom of its mother."

Even as the waves of the sea are tossed about in the storm; as the withered leaves in autumn are whirled on high by the wind; as the reeds of the Meschacebé bend to and fro in a sudden inundation; as a herd of deer bray in the depths of the forest; such was the agitation and tumultuous uproar of the council. Sachems, warriors, matrons, all spoke together. Their wishes varied, their opinions clashed, and the council was on the point of breaking up in confusion, but the old custom at length prevailed, and I was condemned to the stake.

A circumstance, however, happened to retard my fate; the Feast of Death, or the Festival of Souls, was at hand. It is contrary to their custom to execute any captive during the days consecrated to this ceremony. Meanwhile I was strictly guarded, and the Sachems without doubt removed the daughter of Simaghan, for I saw her no more.

All the Indian nations within the space of three hundred leagues round, now began to flock toge-

ther in crowds to celebrate the Festival of Souls. A spacious house of assembly had been erected in a distant part of the desert. On the appointed day each household took the remains of their forefathers from their respective sepulchres, and ranged their skeletons in order and by families, against the walls of the Common Hall of Ancestors. A tempest had arisen, and the winds, the forests, the cataracts, roared around, whilst the elders of the different nations concluded treaties of commerce, of peace, and alliance, over the sacred bones of their fathers. The funeral games were also celebrated. Two virgins strove to wrest from each other a stick of willow. Their bosoms met, their lips united, their hands grasped the twig, now in one place, now in another, as they raised it above their heads. Their delicate feet crossed each other, their fragrant breaths intermingled, they looked at their mothers, blushed,* and were applauded. The juggler invoked Michabou, the Spirit of the Waters. He recounted the exploits of the Great Hare against Matchimanitou, the God of Evil. He spoke of the first man, and of the fair Athaënsic, the first of women, expelled from heaven for their disobedience; of the earth stained with fraternal blood; of the wicked Jouskeka who slew the virtuous Tahouistsaron; of the deluge descending at the command of the Great Spirit;

* The blush of a young Savage is very perceptible.

of Massou, alone saved in his bark canoe, and of the raven dispatched to discover dry land. He also spake of the beautiful Endáe drawn from the realm of spirits by the sweet songs of her spouse.

When the games and songs were over, they prepared to consign the relics of their fathers to permanent burial. Upon the banks of the river Chata-Uche stood a wild fig-tree, which the people had consecrated as an object of worship. There the young women were accustomed to wash their garments, and hang them to dry upon the branches of the aged tree; it was on this spot they had hollowed out an immense sepulchre. They departed from the funereal hall chanting the hymn of death. Each family carried some sacred relics. At length they arrived at the tomb, and depositing the remains, spread them out, and separated them with the skins of beavers and of bears. They piled the earth into a mound, and planted on its summit the Tree of Tears and of Sleep.

What pitiful creatures are men! Those very Indians, whose customs are so interesting; those very women who had manifested such a tender concern for me, now loudly demanded my execution; and whole nations deferred their departure, to enjoy the pleasure of seeing a youth expire in fearful agonies.

At a short distance from the great village, in a valley to the north, stood a gloomy thicket of cypress and of fir-trees, called The Wood of Blood. The path to it lies through the ruins of one of those monuments, the origin of which has not been discovered, but which are the work of a people now unknown. In the centre of this wood is an open space, where they sacrifice their prisoners of war. Thither they conducted me, and every preparation was made for my death. The fatal stake was planted; pines, elms, and cypress trees fell beneath the hatchet, and soon the pile was reared; while the spectators erected amphitheatres with the branches and the trunks of trees. Each invented some new torture; one proposed to scalp me, another to burn out my eyes with flaming brands. I began my death-song:

"I am a true man; I fear neither fire nor death, O Muscogulges! I defy you, and think you less than women. My father, the warlike Outalissi, son of Miscou, has drank in the skulls of your renowned heroes. You shall not draw one single sigh from my heart."

Incensed at my song, one of the warriors pierced my arm with an arrow: I said to him, "Brother, I thank thee."

In spite of all the efforts of my executioners, the preparations for my death could not be

finished before sun-set. They consulted the juggler, who forbade them to trouble the Spirits of Darkness, and my death was postponed till the following day. But, impatient for the enjoyment of the spectacle, and in order to be ready by day-break, the people did not leave the Wood of Blood; they kindled large fires, and amused themselves with dances and feasts.

In the mean time I had been extended on my back, secured by cords, which were tied to my neck, my feet, and my arms, and fastened to stakes driven into the ground. Some of my guards lay down upon these cords, and I could not stir without their perceiving it. Night drew on; the song and the dance gradually ceased; the fires cast only a glimmering light, in which might be seen the shadows of a few straggling savages. At length all became still: but in proportion as the noise of man subsided, that of the desert encreased, and the hollow murmur of the wind succeeded to the tumult of voices.

It was the hour at which the young Indian female, just become a mother, suddenly awakes and starts up in the dead of night, because she hears the piteous cry of her first-born, who longs for the nourishment of her bosom. With my eyes fixed on the heavens, where the crescent moon was wandering among clouds, I reflected

on my sad destiny. Atala appeared to me a monster of ingratitude. I who had devoted myself to the flames rather than abandon her, to be thus deserted at my utmost need! Nevertheless I felt that I loved her still, and that I could die for her with pleasure.

In all extreme states of enjoyment there is a constant stimulus which keeps the faculties awake, and enables us to make the most of the passing hour: but in a state of deep affliction we are, on the contrary, sensible of an indescribable oppression, which has a stupifying effect upon the mind. Eyes that are wearied with weeping instinctively close. How conspicuous the goodness of Providence even in our misfortunes! I at length yielded, in spite of myself, to that overpowering sleep which even the wretched occasionally enjoy. I dreamt that my chains were loosed, and seemed to feel that consolation which is enjoyed, when, after having been heavily oppressed, the hand of charity bursts our chains.

The sensation to which I allude at last became so strong, that it forced me to unclose my eyelids. By the light of the moon beaming through the clouds I beheld a white figure bending over me, and engaged in loosing my fetters. I was on the point of crying out, when a hand, which I instantly recognized, stopped my mouth. A single cord remained, which it seemed im-

possible to cut without disturbing a warrior who covered it entirely with his body. Atala, however, attempted it; the warrior was half awakened by the motion, and rose into a sitting posture. Atala remained immoveable, stedfastly looking at him. The Indian thought he beheld the Spirit of the Ruins; again he laid himself down, and invoking his Manitou, closed his eyes; the cord was severed, and I rose and followed my deliverer. But how many dangers surrounded us! At one time we were near stumbling over some of the savages who were asleep on the ground; at another we were questioned by a guard whom Atala answered in a feigned voice. Infants cried, dogs barked as we passed. Scarcely were we out of this dreadful place when horrid yells resounded through the forest. The camp was roused, a thousand lights were kindled, and the savages were seen running to and fro in every direction with torches. We redoubled our speed.

When the morning dawned on the Apalachian mountains, we were at a considerable distance. Great Spirit! thou well knowest what was my rapture, when I again found myself in the wilderness with Atala; with Atala, my deliverer; with Atala, who had devoted herself to me for ever. Expression failed me; I fell on my knees, and said to the daughter of

Simaghan: "How insignificant is man! but when visited by the Spirits, he sinks to nothing! Thou art a Spirit, thou hast visited me, and I am unable to speak before thee." Atala stretched out her hand to me with a melancholy smile. "I am at length," said she, "obliged to follow you, since you will not escape without me. This night have I bribed the juggler, intoxicated your guards, and hazarded my life for your sake, since you had sacrificed your's for me. Yes! young idolater!" added she, in an accent which made me tremble, "the sacrifice shall be reciprocal!"

Atala put into my hands the weapons which she had the precaution to bring for me, and afterwards dressed my arm with a papaya leaf, bathing the wound with her tears. "It is a healing balm, which you pour upon my wound," said I. "I fear lest it should prove a poison," replied she. With part of her veil she formed a bandage for my arm, and tied it up with one of her ringlets.

Intoxication, which among the savages lasts a long time, and is with them a kind of illness, prevented them, without doubt, from pursuing us for some days. They afterwards went in quest of us, most likely in a western direction, supposing that we had fled towards the Meschacebé; but we had taken a northern direction, guided by the moss upon the trunks of the trees.

We speedily perceived that we had gained but little by my deliverance. The desert unfolded to us its boundless solitudes. Deviating from the right path, wandering wherever chance guided our steps, ignorant of the means of subsistence in these desolate places, what was to become of us? Frequently, as I gazed on Atala, I recalled to mind the story which Lopez had given me to read of Hagar in the wilderness of Beersheba, a tale of times long past, when the life of man was thrice as long as that of the oak.

Atala made me a cloak of the inner bark of the ash-tree, for I was nearly naked. She formed mocassins of the skin of the musk-rat, and embroidered them with porcupine's hair. I, in my turn, took care of her attire. At one time I placed upon her head a wreath of blue mallows, which we found in burial-places abandoned by the Indians; at another time I formed necklaces of the red berries of the azalea; and smiled as I gazed on her marvellous beauty.

When we met with a river, we crossed it upon a raft or by swimming. Atala rested one of her hands upon my shoulder, and we passed like two swans over these solitary waves.

Often, during the oppressive heat of the day, we sought shelter under the moss of the cedars.

Almost all the trees of Florida, particularly the cedar and evergreen-oak, are covered with a white moss, which reaches from their boughs to the ground. When at night you discover by the light of the moon, upon a naked savannah, a solitary holm-oak, clad in this drapery, you would imagine you beheld a phantom dragging after him his long train. The scene is not less picturesque at noon-day, for a crowd of butterflies and other variegated insects, of green parrots, humming-birds, and blue jays, alight upon the surface of this moss, and present the effect of tapestry on a light ground, which the European artist has embroidered with brilliant birds and gay insects.

It was in these verdant halls, prepared in the depths of the wilderness by the Great Spirit, that we reposed during the heat of day. When the winds of heaven, blowing upon one of these mighty cedars, put the whole in motion; when the aërial castle, constructed among its branches, rocks to and fro with all its winged inhabitants lodged beneath its shelter; when ten thousand murmuring sounds proceed from the corridors and recesses of this moving edifice; not all the wonders of the ancient world can bear a comparison with this monument of the wilds.

Every night we kindled a large fire, and formed a tent with a covering of bark, sup-

ported by four poles. If I killed a wild turkey, a pigeon, or pheasant, we suspended it from the end of a stick, before a wood fire, whilst the wind kept it in motion. We regaled ourselves on a species of moss found among the rocks; on the sweet bark of the birch-tree, and on may-apples, which taste like peaches and raspberries. The black walnut, the sumach, and the maple, furnished the wine of our table. Sometimes I went to look among the reeds for a plant, the flower of which grows in the shape of a horn, and contains a quantity of the purest dew. We gave thanks to Providence, for having placed upon the weak stalk of a flower, so refreshing a liquid in the midst of unwholesome marshes; thus doth it nourish hope in the heart corroded by grief, and cause virtue to spring from the bosom of life's afflictions.

Alas! I soon discovered that I was deceived by Atala's seeming composure. The farther we advanced, the more melancholy she grew. She often started without any apparent cause, and suddenly turned away her head. I sometimes surprised her fixing on me the most impassioned looks, when she would immediately turn her eyes towards Heaven in deep affliction. What particularly alarmed me was, that she evidently kept locked up in her breast some painful secret, which her countenance, nevertheless, seemed

ready to betray. At once encouraging and repelling my caresses, exciting and destroying my hopes, when I imagined I had made some progress to her heart, I found myself no farther advanced. How often did she say to me;—"I love thee as the shady grove at noon-day! thou art delightful as the desert with all its flowers and its refreshing gales! If I lean upon thee, I tremble; if my hand meet thine, I am ready to expire! The other day when the wind fanned thy hair upon my face as thou wast reclining on my bosom, I imagined I felt the tender touch of an invisible Spirit. Yes, I have seen the innocent kid upon the mountain of Occona; I have listened to the reasoning of the hermit; but the innocence of the kid, the wisdom of the aged, are less engaging, less powerful than thy words. And yet, my poor Chactas, I can never become thy wife!"

The perpetual conflict between the love and the religion of Atala; her exquisite softness and purity of manners; her firmness of character and her excessive sensibility; the elevation of her soul on great occasions, and extreme susceptibility at other times; all conspired to render her, in my estimation, an incomprehensible being. Atala maintained no feeble authority over the heart; full of passions, she was full of power; she was either to be adored or hated.

After a precipitate flight of fifteen days, we gained the Alleghany mountains, and reached one of the branches of the Tennessee, a river which empties itself into the Ohio. Assisted by Atala, I constructed a boat, smearing it with the gum of the plum-tree, and seaming the planks with the roots of fir. We afterwards stepped into it, and resigned ourselves to the current.

We saw, on doubling a promontory, the Indian village of Stico, with its pyramidal tombs and ruined huts, on the left; on our right we passed the vale of Keow, bounded by a view of the cottages of Jore, situated on the declivity of a mountain of the same name. Gliding down the river, we now passed among towering rocks, the summits of which were brightened by the rays of the setting sun. These profound solitudes were undisturbed by the presence of man. We only saw an Indian hunter, who, resting on his bow, and standing motionless on the point of a rock, resembled a statue, erected on the mountain to the Genius of these wilds.

Atala and I were silent as the scene around us, when suddenly the daughter of exile made the air resound with her voice. She sang, with great emotion, the following song in reference to the country she had quitted:

"Happy are those that never beheld the smoke of the feasts of the stranger, and have only sat down at the banquets of their fathers.

"Were the blue jay of the Meschacébé to ask the Florida nonpareille,* 'Why sadly complain? Have you not here, as in your forests, fine shades, limpid streams, and delicious fruits?' Yes, the nonpareil would answer, but my nest I left in the jessamine, who will fetch it to me? Have you the bright sun that blazed on my savannah?

"Happy are those that never beheld the smoke of the feasts of the stranger, and have only sat down at the banquets of their fathers.

"After a toilsome march, the exhausted traveller mournfully seats himself. He beholds around him the roofs of men; the traveller has no place to rest himself. He knocks at the door, and hangs his bow behind it, claiming hospitality. The owner makes a sign with a refusing hand, the traveller takes back his bow, and bends his wearied steps towards the wilderness.

"Happy are those that never beheld the smoke of the feasts of the stranger, and have only sat down at the banquets of their fathers.

"Marvellous stories, told around the parental hearth, sweet effusions of the soul, tender bliss of mutual love, you charm the days of those that never forsook their own country. Bathed at eve by the religious tears of friendship, their tombs are in their native land.

"Happy are those that never beheld the smoke of the feasts of the stranger, and have only sat down at the banquets of their fathers."

* A small bird of the parrot kind.

Thus sung Atala.—Not a sound interrupted her plaintive strain, save only the almost imperceptible rippling of our boat upon the surface of the stream:—save only that, here and there, a gentle echo caught the sound, which was answered by a second still more feeble, and that by a third almost inaudible. It was as if the souls of two lovers, once unfortunate as we, attracted by the charming melody, were delighting themselves by sighing forth its last tones upon the hills around.

Nevertheless, solitude, the continued presence of the beloved object, our very misfortunes, all contributed to strengthen our mutual affection. Atala's resolution began to give way, and her passion, by weakening her bodily frame, was triumphing over her christian virtues. She was constantly praying to her mother, whose angry spirit she appeared desirous of pacifying. Sometimes she asked me if I could not hear a plaintive voice, and if I did not perceive flames bursting from the ground? As for me, exhausted with fatigue, but still burning with desire, imagining that we were perhaps irrecoverably lost in these forests, often did I clasp Atala in my arms, and propose that we should build a hut in the deserts, and live together secluded from the world for the rest of our days. But she always resisted my importunities. "Re-

member," said she, "my dear friend, that a warrior belongs to his country. What is a feeble woman in comparison with those duties which you have to discharge? Take courage, son of Outalissi, and murmur not against your destiny. The heart of man is like a sponge of the river, which at one time drinks the pure crystal stream, and soon afterwards, when the tempest has disturbed the waters, is swollen with all their impurities. By what right could the sponge say, I thought there never would come the tempest, and that the rays of the sun would never be scorching!"

O René! thou dreadest the pains of the heart, avoid solitude; great passions are solitary, and to banish them to the desert is to conduct them into their own empire. Overwhelmed with grief and anxiety, liable to fall into the hands of our Indian enemies, in danger of being swallowed up by the floods, stung by serpents, or devoured by wild beasts, with difficulty procuring a scanty subsistence, and ignorant which way to turn our steps, our calamities seemed incapable of increase, when an unforeseen misfortune came to fill our cup of sorrow.

It was the twenty-seventh sun since our departure from the huts; the *moon of fire**

* Month of July.

had entered on her course, and every thing announced an approaching tempest. About the hour when the Indian matrons hang their instruments of labour upon the branches of the savin-tree, and when the parrots betake themselves for shelter from the heat to the hollows of the cypresses, the heavens began to lour. Every sound subsided, and the stillness of death reigned through the wilderness. Anon peals of distant thunder reverberated through woods coeval with the world itself. Apprehensive of being engulphed by the waters, we hastened to gain the shore, and seek shelter in the woods.

The spot was marshy. With difficulty we proceeded under the arched smilax, and among spreading vines, indigoes, kidney-beans, and creeping lianes, which like nets entangled our feet. The spungy soil bubbled all around us, and at every step we were near being swallowed up in the mire. Insects without number, and enormous bats, almost blinded us; the rattle-snake rustled on every side; wolves, bears, buffaloes, and tigers, which sought shelter in these retreats, made the woods resound with their howlings.

Meanwhile the gloom redoubled; the lowering clouds descended upon the shady woods. On a sudden they burst; the swift lightning

formed a lozenge of vivid flame, and an impetuous wind from the west, rolled cloud on cloud in terrible confusion. The sky opened at intervals, and through the breaches disclosed other heavens and blazing plains. How terrific, how magnificent the spectacle! The lightning set fire to the forest; the conflagration spread into one vast sheet of flame; columns of sparks and smoke assailed the clouds, which disgorged their thunderbolts amid the general combustion. The Great Spirit veiled the mountains in awful darkness. From the womb of this horrible chaos burst a confused uproar, produced by the rush of winds, the crashing of trees, the roaring of wild beasts, the lengthening peals of thunder, and the hissing of the lightning extinguished in the waters.

The Great Spirit knows well that at that moment I saw, I thought of nothing but of Atala! Beneath the bending trunk of a birch-tree, I endeavoured to shelter her from the torrents of rain. Seated under the tree, supporting my beloved on my knees, and warming her naked feet between my hands, I was happier than the young bride who feels her infant leap, for the first time, within her bosom.

We were listening in silence to the tempest, when, suddenly, I felt a tear fall from Atala upon my bosom. "Tempest of the heart," cried I, "is

this a drop of thy rain?" Then tenderly embracing her whom I loved, "Atala," said I, "there must be something which you conceal from me. Open your heart to me. How does it alleviate our affliction to unburthen it to a friend? Disclose to me the secret of your grief, which you have so long persisted in concealing. Ah! I can guess the cause; you regret your country." "Why should I regret my country," she quickly replied, "since my father was not born in the land of palms?" "What," replied I, perfectly astonished, "your father not born in the land of palms! Who was it then that gave thee being? Answer, I beseech thee!" Atala spoke:

"Before my mother brought to the warrior Simaghan her portion of thirty steeds, twenty oxen, a hundred measures of oil, fifty beaver-skins, and other riches, she had been acquainted with a white man. But her mother obliged her to marry the magnanimous Simaghan, in every respect treated like a king, and honoured by the people as a Spirit. But my mother said to her new spouse:—'Slay me, for my womb has already conceived.' Simaghan replied, 'The Great Spirit prevent me from so base an action; I would not maim thee, nor will I cut off thy nose, or ears, because thou hast been sincere and hast not defiled my bed. The fruit of thy womb shall be mine, and I will not visit thee till the rice-bird has departed, and till the

thirteenth moon has arisen in the sky.' During that time I was born. I grew up, inspired at once with the lofty spirit of a Spaniard and a Savage. My mother made me a Christian, that her God and my father's God might be mine. Afterwards, the sadness of love assailed her, and she descended to the narrow cave hung with skins, from which none ever returns."

Such was the history of Atala. "And who was thy father, poor orphan?" said I; "by what name did he pass among mortals, and how is he called among the Spirits?" I never washed my father's feet," said Atala, "I only know that he lived with his sister at Saint Augustine, and that he has always been faithful to my mother. Philip was his name among the angels, and men called him Lopez."

At these words I uttered a shriek which resounded through the wilderness, and the noise of my transports mingled with that of the tempest. Clasping Atala to my heart, I exclaimed, with emotion, "O my sister! O daughter of Lopez! daughter of my benefactor!" Atala, alarmed, inquired the cause of my agitation; but when she learned that Lopez was the generous protector who had adopted me as his son at Saint Augustine, and whom I had forsaken to be free, she was herself transported with the same feeling of confusion and joy.

Our hearts were completely overcome by the

sensation of fraternal friendship, united to our former affection. Henceforward all the struggles of Atala were useless. In vain did I observe her lift her hand to her bosom, and make an unaccountable movement; already I embraced her, already I inhaled her delicious breath, already I imbibed the magic of love from her lips. With my eyes raised towards heaven, amid the lightning's glare, I held my wife in my arms, in the presence of the Eternal. O thou nuptial pomp, worthy of our misfortunes and the magnitude of our affection! Ye superb forests, that shook your lianes and your tops, as the curtains and the canopy of our marriage couch; ye blazing pines, which served as hymeneal torches; thou overflowing river; ye bellowing mountains; and thou sublime and appalling nature; were ye then but the gaudy equipage prepared to betray us, and could ye not for a moment conceal in your mysterious horrors, the felicity of one human being?

Atala offered but a feeble resistance, and I was on the point of attaining the consummation of my wishes, when, on a sudden, an impetuous flash of lightning, followed by the pealing thunder, penetrated the profound gloom, filled the forest with light and the smell of sulphur, and shivered to pieces a tree at our feet. Full of terror we fled. But strange to tell, in the silence

which succeeded this awful crash, we heard the tinkling of a bell! Speechless, we attentively listened to the sound so unusual in the desert. At that instant a dog barked at a distance; he gradually approached; redoubled his barking; at length came up and howled with joy at our feet. An old hermit, with a small lantern, followed him through the obscure recesses of the forest. "Blessed be Providence!" cried he, as soon as he discovered us, "I have for a long while been in quest of you! This dog of mine has traced you by his scent ever since the commencement of the storm, and has conducted me hither. Gracious God! how young they are! Poor children! how they must have suffered! But let us begone; I have brought with me a bear-skin, which will cover this young woman, and in this calabash there is a little wine. God be praised in all his works! his pity is boundless and his goodness infinite."

Atala fell at the good man's feet. "O thou Chief of Prayer," said she to him, "I am a Christian woman, and Heaven hath sent thee hither in order to save me." "Daughter," said the hermit, raising her, "we generally sound the bell of the mission during the night and in a storm, for the benefit of strangers; and, in imitation of our brethren of the Alps and Mount Lebanon, we have taught our dog to discover the bewildered traveller." As for me, I scarcely

comprehended the hermit; this charity appeared to me so much above human nature, that I thought I was dreaming. By the glimmering of the little lantern which he held, I saw his beard and his hoary locks dripping with water; his feet, his hands, and his face were bloody, with the scratches of brambles. "Old man," said I, at length, "what a heart must thine be, not to be appalled by fear of the lightning!" "Fear!" replied the Father, with a degree of warmth, "fear, whilst a human being is in danger, and I am able to render him assistance! I should then be indeed an unworthy servant of Jesus Christ." "But dost thou know," said I to him, "that I am not a Christian?" "Young man," answered the hermit, "have I asked you your religion? Jesus Christ never said, My blood shall cleanse this one and not that one; he died for the Jew and for the Gentile, and looked upon all men as his brethren. What I now do for you is trifling, and you would find elsewhere abundant succour. But glory does not belong to the humble priest. What are we, feeble anchorites, but mere instruments for the work of heaven! and what soldier would be so dastardly as to retire, when his leader, with the cross in hand, and his brow crowned with thorns, boldly advances to the succour of human beings?

His words penetrated my heart; and tears of

admiration and of tenderness streamed from my eyes. "My dear children," said the missionary, "I superintend in these forests a little flock of your brother savages. My cell is hard by in the mountain; come home with me and warm yourselves: you will not find there the luxuries of life; but you will be comfortably sheltered: and even for this we must praise the divine goodness, for there are multitudes who are destitute of all shelter from the storm."

There are good men, whose consciences are so tranquil that we cannot approach them without partaking of the peace which breathes from their mind and conversation. As the hermit spoke, I felt the force of passion lulled within my breast, while the very storms of heaven seemed to subside at his voice. The clouds were soon sufficiently dispersed to permit us to leave our retreat. We quitted the forest, and began to climb the side of a high mountain. The dog went before us, carrying, at the end of a stick, the lantern, the light of which was extinguished. I held Atala's hand, and we followed the missionary, who frequently turned round to look at us, contemplating our youth and hapless situation with sympathy. A book hung from his neck, and a white staff assisted him in walking. His stature was erect, his face pale and thin, and his physiognomy open and sincere. He had not

the lifeless and uninteresting features of a being born without passions. It was evident that his life had been unhappy, and the wrinkles of his forehead exhibited the traces of passions which had been corrected by virtue and the love of God and man. When he spoke to us standing and motionless, his long beard, his eyes modestly cast downwards, the tender accent of his voice, in short, every thing about him had something sublime and interesting. He who, like me, has seen Father Aubry, traversing the desert, with his breviary and his staff, has a true idea of the Christian pilgrim travelling on the earth.

After a dangerous walk of half an hour through the paths of the mountain, we reached the missionary's grot. We entered it among the ivy and brambles which the rains had washed from the rocks. There was nothing within but a mat of papaya leaves, a calabash for holding water, a few wooden vessels, a spade, a tame serpent, and upon a stone which served as a table, was a crucifix and the book of the Christians.

The man of ancient days soon kindled a fire with some dry reeds; he pounded some maize between two stones, and making a cake of it, placed it on the fire to bake. When this cake became brown, he served it up for us quite warm, with the cream of nuts in a maple bowl.

The night brought a calm, and the servant of

the Great Spirit proposed that we should go and sit upon a fragment of rock, at the entrance of the grotto. We followed him to this place, which commanded a most extensive prospect. The relics of the tempest were thrown in disorder towards the east; the fires kindled in the forests by the lightning still blazed from afar: at the foot of the mountain an entire wood of pines was levelled with the ground, and down the river rolled promiscuously masses of clay, trunks of trees, bodies of dead animals and of fishes, the silver bellies of which appeared above the surface of the waters.

It was in the midst of this scene that Atala related our history to the aged Genius of the Mountain. His christian heart appeared affected, and tears trickled down his beard. "My child," said he to Atala, "you must cast your cares and sufferings upon that God for whose glory you have endured so much; he will console you. See the forests smoke, the torrents dry up, the clouds disperse; and do you imagine that he, who can calm such a tempest, is unable to appease the troubles of the human heart? If you have not a better habitation, my dear daughter, I offer you an asylum among that little flock, which I have had the happiness to convert to Jesus Christ. I will instruct Chactas, and he shall become your husband when he is worthy to be so."

At these words I fell at the knees of the an-

chorite, shedding tears of joy; but Atala turned pale as death. The old man raised me kindly, and we then discovered that both his hands had been mutilated. Atala immediately comprehended his misfortunes. "Oh! the barbarians!" she exclaimed.

"My child," replied the father, with a sweet smile, "what is this when compared with the sufferings of my divine Master? If the idolatrous Indians have tormented me, they are poor blind creatures, whom God will one day enlighten. Nay, I love them the more, in proportion to the pangs they have inflicted on me. I was not able to remain in my own country, to which I had returned, and where an illustrious queen did me the honour to wish for a sight of these trivial marks of my apostleship. And what more glorious recompense could I receive for my labours, than to obtain permission from the chief of our religion, to celebrate the divine service with these mutilated hands? After such an honour, nothing remained for me but to render myself worthy of it; and I am returned to the New World to spend the remainder of my life in the service of my God. I have inhabited these solitudes almost thirty years, and to-morrow I shall have resided on this rock twenty-two. When I arrived in these places, I found nothing but wandering families whose habits

were ferocious, and whose lives were wretched: I have prevailed upon them to hearken to the word of peace, and their manners have been gradually civilized. They now live together at the foot of this mountain. I have endeavoured, while teaching the way of salvation, to instruct them in the first arts of life; and without proceeding farther, to retain them in that honest simplicity which constitutes happiness. For myself, fearing that my presence would be a restraint upon them, I have retired to this grotto, where they occasionally come to consult me. It is here that, far from society, I admire the Deity in the grandeur of these solitudes, and prepare myself for that death which my age announces to be approaching.

As he spoke, the hermit fell on his knees, and we followed his example. He prayed in a loud voice, and Atala made the response. Silent lightnings still flashed along the eastern hemisphere; while the clouds of the west were lighted up with three brilliant suns at once. A few foxes, dispersed by the storm, stretched out their dark muzzles on the borders of the precipice, and we heard the rustling murmur of the plants, which drying by the nocturnal breeze, again raised their drooping stalks.

We re-entered the grotto, where the hermit had prepared a bed of cypress-moss for Atala. An extreme languor was discernible in her eyes,

and in all her motions; she looked at Father Aubry, as if desirous of communicating a secret: but something or other, either my presence, or a feeling of shame, or the inutility of the avowal, appeared to check her. I heard her rise in the middle of the night; she looked about for the anchorite: but as he had resigned his couch to her, he was gone to contemplate the beauty of the heavens, and to perform his devotions on the summit of the mountain. He told me the following day, that this was frequently his custom, even in the season of winter; delighting to behold the forests wave their lofty trees, the clouds roll through the atmosphere, and to hear the winds and torrents rumble through the solitude. Atala returned to her couch, and soon fell asleep. Alas! buoyed up by hope, Atala's distemper appeared to me nothing more than the transient effect of fatigue!

The following day I was awakened by the song of the cardinals and mocking-birds, which roosted among the acacias and laurels that surrounded the grotto. I plucked a bunch of magnolia blossom, and placed it, all bedewed with the tears of morn, upon the head of the slumbering Atala. I fondly hoped, according to the religion of my country, that the spirit of some tender infant, who had died at its mother's bosom, might have descended upon the flower a drop of dew, and that a propitious dream would carry

it into the bosom of my intended spouse. I afterwards went in search of my host, whom I found with his rosary in his hand, seated on the trunk of a decayed pine-tree, and awaiting my arrival. He proposed, that while Atala was enjoying her repose, I should take a walk with him to the Mission. I accepted his offer, and we departed.

In descending the mountain, I discovered some oaks, on which the Spirits appeared to have engraven some of their mysterious spells. The hermit informed me that he himself had carved them; that they were lines of an ancient poet called Homer, and a few sentences of another poet still more ancient called Solomon. There was a certain mysterious harmony between the wisdom of antiquity, these verses encircled with moss, this venerable anchorite who had engraven them, and these aged oaks which, in the heart of the forest, served him for books.

His name, his age, and the date of his mission, were inscribed upon a savannah reed at the foot of these trees. I expressed my surprise at the fragility of this last monument; "Its existence will outlive mine," said the good man, "and its worth will always exceed the little good which I have done."

On arriving at a pass in the valley, I beheld a most wonderful sight. It was a natural bridge, similar to that in Virginia, of which you may

have heard. Men, my son, particularly those of your country, frequently imitate nature, and their copies are always petty. It is not thus with nature, who may appear desirous of imitating the works of art, but in reality furnishes us with the truest models. It is thus that she throws a bridge from the summit of one mountain to that of another, suspends a highway in the clouds, pours forth rivers for canals, carves out hills for columns, and scoops out seas for basins.

We passed under the stupendous arch of this bridge, when another wonder opened upon us; this was the burial-ground belonging to the Indians of the mission, or the Grove of Death. Father Aubry had allowed his converts to bury their dead after their own manner, and to retain the ancient appellation of the burial-place; he had merely consecrated this spot with a crucifix.* The ground was divided, like their harvest field, into as many lots as there were families, and each of them had planted a grove in its own allotment suited to its own taste. A rivulet meandered in silence through these groves; and it was called the Rivulet of Peace. This blooming asylum of the dead was bounded

* Father Aubry had followed the example of the Jesuits in China, who permitted the Chinese to inter their relations in their gardens according to their ancient custom.

on the east by the bridge under which we had passed; two hills enclosed it on the north and south; it was exposed only on the western side, where stood a large wood of pines. The trunks of these trees, of a red colour, variegated with green, rising to a point without a branch, resembled lofty columns, and served as a porch to this temple of death. A solemn murmur reigned in these groves, like the hollow sound of the organ beneath the domes of a Christian cathedral; but upon penetrating the recesses of the sanctuary, nothing could be heard but the hymns of birds, which seemed to warble forth solemn dirges to the memory of the departed.

On leaving these woods we descried the village of the mission, seated on the side of a lake, in the middle of a cultivated savannah. We entered by an avenue of magnolias and green oaks, which lined one of those ancient roads, that are met with near the mountains which divide Kentucky from Florida. As soon as the Indians saw their venerable pastor, they abandoned their work and ran towards him. Some respectfully kissed his garments; others assisted his tottering steps; the mothers lifted up their infants in their arms that they might behold the man of God, who shed tears of affection. As we proceeded, he informed himself of what had happened in the village; some he admonished, others he gently rebuked; he spoke to them of

the harvest, of the instruction of their children; he administered consolation to the afflicted, and the Deity mingled constantly in his speech.

Escorted thus, we arrived at the foot of a large cross, which was placed by the road-side, and where the servant of God was accustomed to perform the ceremonies of his religion. "My dear converts," said he, addressing the crowd, "a brother and a sister are arrived among you; and, to heighten our happiness, I see that Providence has spared our crops from the violence of yesterday's storm. Here are two powerful motives for thanksgiving. Let us offer to him the divine sacrifice, and let every one bring devout attention, a lively faith, boundless gratitude, and a contrite spirit.

The holy man next clad himself in a white robe; the sacred vessels were taken from a tabernacle at the foot of the cross; a fragment of rock formed the altar, water was supplied by a neighbouring torrent, and a bunch of wild grapes furnished wine for the sacrifice. We all knelt on the long grass, and the mysterious rite began.

The morning, rising from behind the mountains, illumined the eastern hemisphere, diffusing all around its roseate and golden beams. The luminary announced by so much splendour at length arose from the abyss of light, and threw his first ray upon the consecrated host, which

the priest, at that very moment, was raising towards Heaven. O ye charms of religion! O thou magnificence of the Christian worship! An aged hermit to administer its rites; for an altar a rock, for a sanctuary the desert, for an audience a few artless savages! Yes, I am well assured that, in the act of prostration, the mystery was accomplished: for how could I doubt that God had descended upon earth, when I felt that he had, at that moment, actually descended into my own bosom!

After the sacrifice, where nothing was wanting but the presence of the daughter of Lopez, we returned to the village. This place presented the most interesting combination of the uncivilized and the social life. At one corner of a cypress grove, which had formerly stood in the desert, was a promising plantation; the golden ears of corn waved upon the spot where the demolished oak had stood, and the blooming herbage of spring replaced the tree of three ages. In every direction were seen forests abandoned to the flames, throwing forth volumes of smoke; and the plough slowly advancing among the remnants of roots. Surveyors, with their long chains, were measuring the desert, and arbitrators apportioning the first allotments of property. The bird relinquished its nest; the lair of the wild beast was converted to a hut. The forges resounded all around, and the strokes of

the sledge-hammer were repeated by echoes, soon to expire with the trees that had hitherto served them as a shelter.

Rapturously did I wander amidst this beautiful scenery, rendered sweeter by the remembrance of Atala, and by the fond anticipations of felicity in which my heart indulged. I admired the triumph of Christianity over the savage life; I saw the Indian gradually civilized by the voice of religion; I was present at the primitive marriage between Man and the Earth; man, by this great contract, devoting to the earth the sweat of his brow, and the Earth, engaging in return, faithfully to produce the plenteous harvest, to support his offspring and to preserve his ashes.

An infant was brought to the missionary, who baptised it among the blooming jessamines on the brink of a rivulet; while a funeral procession advanced through sports and the labours of the field to the Groves of Death. A newly married couple received the nuptial benediction beneath an oak, and we afterwards went to introduce them to their plantation. The pastor walked before us, blessing here and there, the rock, the tree, and the fountain; as in ancient times, according to the book of the Christians, God blessed the uncultivated earth, when he gave it to Adam as his heritage. This little procession, which promiscuously with their

flocks followed their venerable chief from rock to rock, recalled to my memory those migrations of the first families of mankind, when Shem, with his children, traversed the unknown world, guided by the sun, which marched before him.

I enquired of the holy hermit how he governed this little society; and he answered me with the greatest cheerfulness: "I have never imposed on them a single law: I have merely directed them to love one another, to worship God, and to look forward to a better life; precepts in which all laws are included. You observe in the centre of the village a larger hut than the surrounding ones; it serves for our chapel during the rainy seasons. There we assemble night and morn to perform our devotions, and when I am absent, my duty devolves upon one of the aged fathers; for age, like maternity, is a kind of priesthood. Afterwards the villagers go to labour in the fields; and although the possessions are divided, in order that each may be habituated to social economy, the harvests are deposited in public granaries, to maintain the bond of fraternal charity. Four of our elders distribute equally the produce of the common industry. If to this be added our religious ceremonies, our spiritual songs, the cross at which I have just celebrated the divine service, the elm under

which I preach in fair weather, the tombs near our corn fields, the rivers where I baptize the little infants, and the St. Johns of this new Bethany; you will then have a complete idea of this kingdom of Jesus Christ."

The words of the recluse delighted me; and I was convinced of the superiority of this settled and busy life, over the wandering and idle life of the savage.

Ah! René, I murmur not against Providence, but I confess that I never take a retrospect of this evangelical society, without feeling all the bitterness of regret. How happy could I have lived in a simple hut with Atala upon those plains! There would my wanderings have terminated; there, with my beloved wife, secluded from society, concealing my happiness in the bosom of the forests, I should have glided through life, like those rivers, which have not even a name in the desert! Instead of that serenity with which I then ventured to flatter myself, in what a perturbed course has my existence flowed! Buffetted by fortune, wrecked on every shore, for long time exiled from my native country, and at my return finding nothing but my hut in ruins, and my friends forgotten in the tomb —— such was to be the destiny of Chactas!

If my dream of happiness was lively, it was also short, for I was roused from it on my return to the grotto. As we approached it about mid-day, I was surprised to find that Atala did not run to meet us. I was suddenly seized with a strange feeling of horror. On approaching the cave, I dared not even to utter the name of the daughter of Lopez; my imagination was equally afraid of the sound or the silence which might have succeeded my cries. Still more affrighted from the darkness which reigned at the entrance of the rock, I said to the missionary, "O, thou who art accompanied and fortified by heaven! enter the darkness!"

How weak is he over whom the passions reign! How valiant he who confides in the Deity! There was more courage in that pious heart, debilitated by the lapse of seventy-six years, than in mine, though flushed with all the ardour of youth. The good man entered the grotto, while I, full of terror, remained without. Soon, however, a feeble groan from the cave, like that of a person in pain, struck upon my ear. Recovering all my strength, I uttered a shriek, and rushed into the gloomy cell—Spirits of my Sires! ye alone know the dreadful sight which presented itself to my eyes!

The hermit had lighted a pine torch, which he held with a trembling hand over the couch

of Atala. That beautiful young woman, with a pale countenance and dishevelled hair, was supporting herself upon her elbow. Drops of perspiration produced by her agonies stood on her face; her dim eyes were turned towards me with inexpressible tenderness, and her lips were half formed into a smile. Thunderstruck, with my eyes fixed, my arms stretched out, my lips half open, I remained motionless. We all kept profoundly silent for a few moments. The hermit spoke first. "It can be nothing more," said he, "than a fever occasioned by excessive fatigue, and if we resign ourselves to the will of God, he will take pity on us."

At these words my blood, the circulation of which had been suspended, again resumed its course, and with the fickleness of a savage, I was suddenly transported from the excess of fear to the excess of hope. But Atala did not long leave me thus. She shook her head mournfully, and made a sign that we should approach her couch.

"Father," said she, in a tremulous voice, addressing the hermit, "I am now at the hour of death. O Chactas! listen without despair to the fatal secret which I have concealed from you in mercy to your feelings and obedience to my mother. Endeavour not to interrupt me by your expressions of sorrow, which would hasten the termination of my life. I have many things

to tell you; and yet, from the faint palpitation of my heart, — from the indescribable cold weight upon my bosom,—I feel that I have no time to lose.

After a few moments of silence, Atala continued:

" My unhappy destiny commenced almost before my existence. My mother had conceived me in misfortune, and she brought me into the world with the most dreadful agony. In order to save my life, which was despaired of, my mother made a vow; she promised the Queen of Angels that I would consecrate to her my virginity, if I escaped death.—Ah! fatal vow! has brought me to the tomb!

" My sixteenth year was but just begun when I lost my mother. A few hours before her death she called me to her bed-side. ' My child,' said she to me, in the presence of a missionary who was comforting her in her last moments, ' my child, you know the vow which I have sworn for you. Would you betray your mother? O my Atala! I leave you in a world which is unworthy to possess a Christian, in the midst of idolaters who persecute your father's God and mine; that God, who after having given you existence, preserved it by a miracle. In taking the virgin's veil, you but avoid the miseries of society, and the baleful passions which have racked your

mother's bosom! Come then, my dear child, come; swear by this image of the mother of our Saviour to this holy priest and your expiring parent, that you will never violate my solemn vow. Remember that I was bound for your sake, in order to save your life, and if you break my promise, you will plunge your mother's soul into eternal torments.'

"O my mother! why spoke you thus? O religion, that art at once my misery and my happiness! that both destroyest and comfortest me! And thou, dear and unhappy object of a passion which consumes me, even in the arms of death; thou now seest, O Chactas, what has caused the rigour of our destiny!—Bathed in tears, I fell on my mother's bosom, and promised every thing she required. The missionary pronounced over me the awful words, and gave me the scapulary which was the sign of my eternal bondage. My mother threatened me with her malediction if I ever violated my vow, and having recommended me to keep the affair secret from the Pagans, who persecuted our religion, she expired while I was in her embraces.

"I knew not at first the danger of my oath. Full of ardour and Christianity, proud of the Spanish blood which flowed in my veins, I saw no one around me but men unworthy to receive my hand; I congratulated myself that I had no

other husband than the God of my mother. At length I saw thee, a young and comely prisoner; I was affected at thy misfortunes; I ventured to speak to thee in the forest; and then, alas! I felt all the weight of my vows."

When Atala had spoken, clenching my fist, and looking on the missionary with a threatening air, I exclaimed, "Is this then the religion of which you boast so much! Perish the oath which separates me from Atala! Perish the God who thwarts the impulse of nature! And thou, O man! O priest! what art thou come to do in these forests?"

"To save thee," said the old man, with a terrible voice; "to subdue thy passions; to prevent thee, thou blasphemer, from drawing on thyself the wrath of heaven! It well becomes thee, young man, scarcely entered upon life, to complain of affliction! Where are the marks of thy sufferings? Where are the grievances thou hast endured? Where are thy virtues, which alone could give thee a right to complain? What services hast thou rendered? What good hast thou performed? Wretched man! thou hast nothing to shew but passions, and yet thou profanely darest to accuse heaven. When, like Father Aubry, thou shalt have spent thirty years in exile upon the mountains, thou wilt not be so ready to arraign the proceedings of Providence; thou wilt be convinced that thou knowest no-

thing, that thou art nothing; and that there is no punishment, however rigorous, no evils however terrible, that the flesh, all corrupt as it is, deserves not to suffer."

The lightnings which flashed from the old man's eyes, his beard, which beat against his breast, his thundering words, gave him the appearance of a divinity. Overpowered by his majestic deportment, I fell at his knees, and implored his pardon for my frantic transports. "My son," he answered, in an accent of tenderness that overwhelmed me with remorse, "it is not on my own account that I have thus upbraided you. Alas! you are right, young man, the good which I am come to perform in these forests is but trifling, and God has not a more unworthy servant than I. But, my son, Heaven—Heaven we must never accuse. Forgive me if I have offended you; but let us listen to your sister. Some hope may yet be left. Do not give way to despair. Chactas, that must be a divine religion which makes a virtue of hope."

"My beloved," resumed Atala, "thou hast been witness to my conflicts, and yet thou hast seen but an inconsiderable part; for I have studiously concealed the rest. No, the negro slave, who with his sweat bedews the parched plains of Florida, is less miserable than Atala has been. Solicitous for thy flight, and yet certain that I should die if thou hadst left me: fearful of fleeing with

thee into the desert, and yet panting for the shady woods ——— Ah! if it had only been necessary to leave my parents, friends, and country — if I had risked nothing more than the perdition of my own soul, however frightful the idea! ——— but thy shade, my mother, thy shade was always present, reproaching me with thy torments! Yes, I heard thy moans, I saw thee consumed by the flames of hell! At night my imagination was full of phantoms; my days were desolate; the dews of eve dried as soon as they fell on my parched skin; I opened my lips to receive the cooling breeze, and the breeze far from refreshing me, was heated by the fire within me! What torment to behold thee incessantly beside me, far from all other society, in the depths of solitude, and to be conscious of an insuperable barrier between us! To pass my life at thy feet, to wait on thee as thy slave, to prepare thy meals and thy couch, would have been to me supreme happiness: at that happiness I almost arrived, and could not enjoy it! What schemes did I form! What plans did I revolve in this distracted heart! Sometimes, when fixing my eyes on thee, I was ready to entertain the most extravagant and criminal desires! Sometimes I could have wished to be, with thee, the only living creature on earth; at other times, sensible of a divine impulse, which arrested the wild transports of my soul, I could have wished the Deity himself

annihilated, if encircled in thy arms I might have rolled from abyss to abyss amid the wreck of God and the world! Even at this very moment ——— shall I confess it? ——— now that Eternity is about to receive me, and I am on the point of appearing before the inexorable judge; yes, at this very moment, while sacrificing my life to filial obedience; alas! I regret that I have not been thine."

"My daughter," interrupted the missionary, "your grief distracts you. That excess of passion to which you abandon yourself is seldom right; it is not even natural, and on this account is less blameable in the eyes of God, because it is rather a delirium of the mind, than a vice of the heart. Curb, then, these flights of passion, which are unworthy of your innocence. Besides, my dear child, your impetuous imagination has too much alarmed you respecting your vows. Religion requires no sacrifice beyond the power of human nature. Its genuine sentiments, its tempered virtues, are far above the exalted sentiments and the over-strained refinements of a pretended heroism. If you had gone astray, poor bewildered sheep! the good shepherd would have sought you out, and brought you back to his flock. The treasures of repentance were open to you. Torrents of blood are required to expiate our faults in the eyes of mankind; a single tear satisfies the Deity. Take

courage then, my dear child, your situation requires tranquillity; let us apply to God, who heals all the afflictions of his servants. If it be his will, as I trust it is, that you should recover from this disease, I will write to the Bishop of Quebec; he possesses the necessary powers to release you from your vows, and you shall end your days near me, with Chactas, your spouse."

As the old man spoke, Atala was seized with strong convulsions, which subsided only to give way to violent agonies. "What!" said she, wildly clasping her hands, "was there then a remedy? Could I have been released from my vows?" "Yes, my child," replied the father, "and still can." "It is too late! it is too late!" she exclaimed. "Must I then die at the moment that I learn that I might have been happy? O that I had known this good old man before! what happiness would now be mine, with thee, with the Christian Chactas — comforted, encouraged by this venerable priest! —— always in this desert! —— Oh! this would have been happiness too great!"—"Calm thyself," said I, seizing one of her hands, "calm thyself; this happiness we shall still enjoy."—"Never! never!" said Atala.—"Why not?" replied I. —"Thou knowest not all!" exclaimed the virgin; "yesterday —— during the storm——I was on the point of violating my vows——I had almost plunged my mother into the flaming

abyss——already was her curse upon me—already had I belied before God the being who had saved my life.—When you kissed my trembling lips,—you knew it not! you knew not that you embraced death!"—"O heavens!" exclaimed the missionary: "what hast thou done, my dear child?"—"A crime, father," said Atala with the wildest looks; "but I have destroyed myself alone, and saved my mother." "Go on! Go on!" cried I, full of terror. "Alas!" said she; "I foresaw my weakness;—on leaving my father's house,—I brought away with me————" "What?" exclaimed I, with horror. "Poison?" said the hermit. "It is already in my heart," replied Atala.

The torch dropped from the old man's hand. I fell senseless by the side of the daughter of Lopez. The aged Father threw his arms round us both, and all three, amid the gloom, mingled for a moment our sobs upon the funeral couch.

"Let us arise, let us arise," said the hermit, after a short pause, lighting a lamp. "Let us not lose such precious moments. Intrepid Christians! let us brave the assaults of adversity; with the cord round our necks, with the burning coals upon our heads, let us cast ourselves at the feet of the Most High, to implore his mercy and submit ourselves to his decrees. Perhaps

there is yet time.—My child, you should have told me of this last night."

"Alas! father," said Atala, "I rose to look for you last night; but heaven, as a punishment for my sins, had sent you out of the way. Indeed all assistance would have proved useless; for the Indians themselves, so skilful in every thing relative to poison, know no antidote for what I have taken. O, Chactas! judge of my astonishment when I found its effect so much slower than I expected. My affection for thee has redoubled the force of nature; my spirit has been unwilling so soon to part from thine."

It was not by sobs that I interrupted Atala's sad narration, but by those violent transports peculiar to savages. I rolled wildly on the ground, — tearing my arms and gnawing my hands. The aged priest, with astonishing tenderness, ran from brother to sister, prodigal of his attentions. Notwithstanding the serenity of his own heart, and the weight of years, he could readily enter into our youthful feelings, and his sublime religion furnished him with accents at once more tender and more ardent than our very passions. Does not this priest, who for forty years sacrified himself every day to the service of God and man upon the mountains, recal to your remembrance those

burnt-offerings of Israel, perpetually smoking on the high places before the Lord?

Alas! it was in vain that he attempted to apply a remedy to Atala's illness. Fatigue, chagrin, poison, and a passion more mortal than any poison, combined to snatch away this flower of the desert. Towards evening the most alarming symptoms appeared; a general numbness seized her limbs, and their extremities grew cold. "Touch my fingers," said she to me, "do they not feel frozen like ice?" I knew not what to answer, and my hair stood on end with horror; she afterwards added. "It was but yesterday, my beloved, that thy mere touch made me thrill with rapture, but now I feel thy hand no longer, I scarcely hear thy voice;—every object in the cave gradually disappears;—do I not hear the warbling of birds? The sun must surely be near setting.—O Chactas! how fair will his beams in the desert gleam upon my tomb!"

Atala, perceiving that her words deeply affected us, said, "Forgive me, my dear friends," I am very feeble; but perhaps I shall soon grow stronger. Nevertheless, to die so young! —so suddenly!—when my heart was so replete with life!—O thou man of prayer, have pity on me; support me. Dost thou believe that my mother is satisfied, and that God will pardon the sin which I have committed?"

"Daughter," said the good man, shedding tears, which he brushed away with his trembling and mutilated fingers; "daughter, all your misery proceeds from your ignorance; your savage education and the want of instruction have undone you; you know not that a Christian is not at liberty to dispose of his own life. Comfort yourself, poor harmless lamb; God will forgive you, on account of the simplicity of your heart. Your mother, and the imprudent missionary who directed her, have been more blameable than you; they exceeded their authority in extorting from you an imprudent vow; but the peace of the Lord be with them! You all three present a terrible example of the danger of enthusiasm and want of knowledge in religious affairs. But take courage, my child; he who tries the reins and the heart will judge you according to your intentions, which were pure, and not according to the act itself, which is to be condemned.

"As to life, if the moment be come for you to rest in the bosom of the Lord; ah! my child, how little you lose in leaving this world! Notwithstanding the solitude in which you have lived, you have become acquainted with grief; what would you then think if you had witnessed the afflictions of society; if, on landing upon the shores of Europe, the universal cry of grief, which is raised in that ancient

land, had struck your ear. The tenant of the lowly hut and of the lofty palace, all suffer, all groan here below! Queens have wept like other women, and the world has been astonished at the quantity of tears that have issued from the eyes of kings.

"Is it your love which you regret? You might as well lament the fleeting dream. Do you know the heart of man, and can you reckon the fluctuations of his desires? Sooner could you count the number of waves that roll over the bosom of the deep during a storm. Atala! sacrifices and kindness do not form eternal bonds of union; one day, perhaps, dislike would have come with satiety; the past would have been considered nothing, and nothing would have remained in prospect but the evils of an unfortunate alliance. Doubtless, my child, the purest affection that ever subsisted was that between the first man and woman when fresh from their creator's hands. A paradise was allotted them for their residence; they were innocent and immortal. Perfect in soul and body, they were formed for each other; Eve had been created for Adam, and Adam for Eve. If they, nevertheless, could not maintain themselves in a state of happiness, what can be hoped from their posterity? I say nothing of the marriages among the first born of men—of that ineffable union, by which the sister became her

brother's wife; when love and fraternal friendship were blended in the same breast, and the purity of the one enhanced the delights of the other. Even connexions of this kind were unfortunate; jealousy stole to the turf altar on which the kid was sacrificed: it reigned in the tent of Abraham; and on those couches where the patriarchs tasted such joys as made them forget the death of their mothers.

"Would you then flatter yourself, my child, with being more innocent and happy than those holy families from which Jesus Christ descended? I spare you a recital of the cares, the family disputes, the mutual reproaches, the inquietudes, and all those secret pains which hover round the pillow of the marriage-bed. Woman goes in tears to the altar, and her pangs are renewed every time she is a mother. What anguish does she feel at the loss of her new-born infant, whom she nourished with her milk, and who dies upon her bosom! The mountain resounded with the cries of Rachel, who would not be comforted, because her children were no more. The sorrows inseparable from human attachments rage so fierce, that illustrious dames, caressed by princes, have quitted courts and secluded themselves in cloisters, to mortify the body, whose pleasures are but pains.

"But perhaps you will say, that these latter examples cannot apply to you; that all your

ambition was to live in an obscure hut, with the man of your choice; that you sought less the sweets of marriage than the charms of that folly which youth calls love. Illusion—chimera—vanity—delirium of a disordered imagination! I, myself, my child, have known the troubles of the heart; this head was not always bald, nor this bosom so tranquil as it may appear to you at present. Trust then to my experience; if man, steady in his affections, could incessantly supply a sentiment which is incessantly being renewed, solitude and love would make him equal to God himself; for these are the two eternal pleasures of the Great Being. But a man's mind becomes tired, and he never loves, for any length of time, the same object with the same intensity. There are always some points in which two hearts cannot coincide, and these points ultimately render life insupportable.

"In short, my dear child, the grand error of men, in their dreams of happiness, is forgetfulness of that infirmity in our nature called death. Life must come to an end. Whatever might have been your happiness, sooner or later that lovely countenance would have assumed that uniform complexion, which the sepulchre gives to the whole race of Adam; not even the eye of Chactas would have distinguished you among your sisters in the tomb. Love extends not his

empire to the worm of our coffin. What am I saying? (O vanity of vanities!) Why should I speak of the stability of earthly friendships? Would you know their extent? Could a man be restored to life, after a few years' absence in the grave, his return would be joyless and unwelcome, even to those who had most bewailed his loss. So soon are other connexions and other habits formed! so naturally inconstant is man! of such trifling moment is our life, even in the estimation of our dearest friends!

"Be grateful then to that divine goodness, my dear child, which so soon removes you from this vale of tears. Already the white robe and the virgin's splendid crown await you in heaven; already I hear the Queen of Angels address you: 'Come, my worthy servant; come my dove; come and seat yourself upon the spotless throne, with the virgins who have sacrificed their youth and beauty to the service of humanity, to the education of children, and to works of penitence. Come, mystic rose, and repose yourself on the bosom of Jesus Christ. This bier, the nuptial couch which you have chosen, shall not disappoint you, and the embraces of your heavenly spouse shall never have an end!'"

As the last light of day calms the winds and diffuses serenity over the heavens; so the soothing words of the old man allayed the tumultuous passions in the breast of my beloved. She

thought of nothing but my grief, and the means of making her loss supportable. At one time she told me she could die happy, if I would promise to dry up my tears; at another she spoke to me of my mother and my country; she endeavoured to divert my attention from our present affliction by awakening the remembrance of past sorrow. She exhorted me to patience and to virtue. "You will not always be unhappy," said she, "if Heaven afflict you now, it is only to make you more compassionate towards others. The human heart, Chactas, is like those trees which never give their balm for the wounds of man until the steel has entered them."

When she had thus spoken, she turned towards the missionary, and sought from him that consolation with which she had endeavoured to inspire me; and alternately consoling and consoled, she gave and received the word of life on the couch of death.

Meanwhile the hermit redoubled his zeal. His aged frame was invigorated by the warmth of charity; while administering medicines, enlivening the fire, and arranging the bed, he discoursed most admirably respecting God and the happiness of the just. With the torch of religion in his hand, he appeared to conduct Atala to the tomb, in order to reveal to her its secret wonders. The humble grotto was filled with the grandeur of this Christian demise, and

celestial spirits were, doubtless, attentive to the scene, where religion struggled singly against love, youth, and death.

That divine religion triumphed, and manifested its victory by the holy melancholy which succeeded in our hearts the first transport of the passions. About the middle of the night, Atala seemed to revive a little, and repeated the prayers which the hermit pronounced at her bedside. A short time after she stretched out her hand to me, and in a voice scarcely audible, said: "Son of Outalissi, dost thou remember the night when thou didst take me for the Virgin of the last Love? O wonderful presage of our destiny!" Here she paused a little, and then continued: "When I consider that I am about to leave you for ever, my heart makes such an effort to live again, that I almost feel myself, by my affection for you, rendered immortal. But, O my God, thy will be done!" She was silent for some moments, and then added: "It only remains that I ask your forgiveness for the misfortunes I have brought upon you. My pride and caprice have afflicted you sorely—Chactas, a little mould thrown upon this body will interpose a whole world between us, and deliver you for ever from the weight of my woes."

"Forgive you!" answered I, drowned in tears, "is it not I who have caused all your

troubles?" "Ah! Chactas," said she, interrupting me, "you have rendered me supremely happy; and if I were to begin life again, I would prefer the felicity of having loved you, even for a few moments in an unfortunate exile, to a whole life of repose in my native land."

Here the voice of Atala failed; the shadows of death overspread her countenance; her torpid fingers vainly grasped at the surrounding objects; she conversed inaudibly with invisible spirits. Then making an effort, she endeavoured, but in vain, to loosen from her neck the little crucifix; she entreated me to untie it, and then said:

"When I spoke to thee for the first time, thou sawest this little cross glitter by the light of the fire on my bosom; it is the only possession of Atala. Lopez, thy father and mine, sent it to my mother, at my birth. Receive then, from me, my brother, this inheritance, and keep it as a token of my misfortunes. Amid the miseries of life, you will have recourse to him who succours the distressed. O Chactas, I have still one request to make. Our union in this life, my friend, would have been short, but we must soon have entered upon a life immortal. How dreadful to be separated from you for ever! I but go a little before you, and shall await you in the heavenly kingdom. If you have loved me,

embrace the Christian religion, which will prepare you for our eternal reunion. This divine religion accomplishes a miracle even now before you, in enabling me to leave you, without dying in the agonies of despair. But, Chactas, I ask but a simple promise; I know too well the importance of an oath to exact it from you: and perhaps the vow would separate you from some other woman happier than I. O my mother! pardon thy misguided child! O Virgin! withhold thy wrath! Again I relapse into weakness and rob thee, my God, of those meditations which are due to thee only."

Heart-stricken with grief, and nearly choaked by my sobs, I promised Atala that I would embrace the Christian religion. Upon this the hermit rising with an air of inspiration, and stretching forth his arms towards the roof of the grotto: "It is time," he exclaimed, "to call on God!"

Scarcely had he uttered these words, when, overcome by a supernatural impulse, I fell upon my kness, and leant my head upon the foot of Atala's bed. The priest opened a secret place, which contained a golden urn covered with a silk veil; he prostrated himself in profound adoration. The grotto appeared as if suddenly illuminated; I seemed to hear the voices of angels and the music of celestial harps in the air, and when the anchorite took the sacred vase from

its tabernacle, I imagined that I saw God himself issuing from the bosom of the mountain.

The priest opened the urn; he took between his two fingers a consecrated wafer, whiter than snow, and pronouncing some mysterious words, approached Atala. The dying saint turned up her eyes to Heaven in ecstacy. All her pains appeared suspended, all the remains of life seemed collected on her lips, which, half open, sought respectfully the divinity concealed in the mystic bread. Then the holy hermit dipped a little cotton in consecrated oil, and bathed with it the temples of Atala; he looked for a moment at the dying maid, and suddenly exclaimed with energy: "Depart! thou Christian Spirit! go and join thy Creator!"— Raising my dejected head, and beholding the vase which contained the sacred oil, I said: "Father! does this remedy possess sufficient virtue to restore my Atala to life?" "Aye, my son," said the old man, falling on my neck, to "eternal life!"——Atala had that instant expired.—

At this part of his story Chactas was obliged to pause. His tears fell in torrents, and his voice could articulate only a few broken accents. The blind Sachem opened his breast, and took from thence the crucifix which had belonged to Atala. "Behold," he cried, "the token of adversity! O René! O my son! thou

canst see it; but I can see it no longer. Tell me, after the lapse of so many years, is not the gold tarnished? Do you not see the marks of my tears? Can you discover the spot that a saint has touched with her lips? And is Chactas not yet a Christian? What frivolous motives of policy and of native prejudice, have made him still retain the errors of his ancestors? No; I will delay no longer. The earth cries to me—'When thou art descending to the tomb, why dost thou hesitate to embrace a religion so divine?'—O earth thou shalt not wait long to receive me! As soon as the holy priest shall have regenerated in the streams my hoary head, blanched with grief, I hope again to be united to my Atala!—But let me finish what remains to be told of my sad story."

I will not attempt, O René! to paint the despair which seized my soul, when Atala breathed her last. It would be requisite that I should have more energy than I now possess; and that my eyes, so long closed in darkness, should again be opened to the sun, to ask of him the amount of those tears which he saw me shed. Yes, that moon which now beams upon our heads, shall cease to gild the solitudes of Kentucky; the river, which now bears our floating bark upon its stream, shall stop its course, before my tears shall cease to flow or Atala! For two entire days, I was insensible to the discourses of the hermit. In his efforts to

assuage my anguish, this excellent man did not administer earthly comfort, but, embracing me, contented himself with saying: "My son, it is the will of God!" I never could have believed that there was such abundant consolation in this exclamation of the resigned Christian, if I had not myself experienced it.

The earnestness, unction, and unalterable patience of this old servant of the Most High, at length overpowered the obstinacy of my grief; I was ashamed that he should have shed so many tears on my account. "Father," said I, "this is too much; let not the passions of a young man any longer disturb the tranquillity of your life. Let me take away the remains of my beloved; I will bury them in some corner of the desert, and if I am still doomed to existence, I will endeavour to render myself worthy of those eternal nuptials which have been promised me by Atala."

At this unexpected return of composure, the good Father was overjoyed. "O blood of Jesus Christ!" said he, "blood of my divine master! I perceive thy efficacy! Thou wilt surely redeem this young man. O God! finish thy work. Restore peace to this disconsolate soul, and let no affliction remain, save an humble and edifying recollection of his woes."

The good man refused to leave the body of the daughter of Lopez at my dispoaal: but he

proposed to assemble his converts, and to inter it with all the ceremonies of Christian burial. To this I, in turn, objected. "The misfortunes and the virtues of Atala," said I, "are unknown to society; let her grave too, dug by your hands and mine, enjoy the same obscurity." We agreed to go the following morning at day-break, and inter Atala beneath the arch of the natural bridge, at the entrance of the Groves of Death. It was also resolved, that we should pass the night in prayer beside the remains of the saint.

Towards evening we carried her precious relics to the northern opening of the grotto. The hermit had folded the body in a piece of European linen, woven by his mother; it was the only article of his own country which he had left, and that for a long time he intended for his own shroud. Atala was laid out upon a carpet of sensitive plants; her feet, her head, her shoulders, and part of her bosom, were uncovered. In her hair was a withered flower of the magnolia;—the very same which I had placed upon the virgin's couch to make her fruitful. Her lips, like a rose-bud cropt two days, seemed to languish and to smile; and in her pale cheeks a few blue veins were visible. Her beautiful eyes were closed, her modest feet were joined, and her hands, white as alabaster, pressed to her heart a crucifix of ebony; the scapulary, on

which the fatal oath had been taken, hung from her neck. She appeared as if enchanted by the Angel of Melancholy, and by the two-fold slumber of innocence and of the tomb. Never did I see any thing more heavenly: those who knew not that she had ever breathed, would have taken her for the statue of sleeping Virginity.

The holy man passed the whole night in prayer; I remained in silence near the pillow of my Atala's funeral couch. How many times while she slept, had I supported on my knees that lovely head! How many times had I leant over it, listening to and inhaling her breath! But now, not a single sound proceeded from her motionless bosom, and in vain I waited for the awakening of beauty!

The moon lent her pale torch to this funeral scene. She rose at midnight like a white vestal, going to weep by the corpse of her companion. Soon she whispered through the forest that secret tale of melancholy, which she loves to recount to the aged oak and to the ancient shores of the ocean. Now and then the hermit dipped a blooming branch into some consecrated water; then sprinkling it around, he perfumed the night with heavenly odours. At times he repeated to a mournful tune some verses from an ancient poet, called Job:

"He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not."

"Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul?"

Thus chanted the ancient man. His hollow, tremulous voice, poured through the silence of the deserts. Every echo, every torrent, every forest, repeated the word of God and of the tomb. The cooing of the doves of Virginia, the falling of the torrent in the mountain, the tinkling of the little bell which invited the bewildered traveller, mingled with our funeral dirges; and choirs of departed spirits in the Groves of Death, seemed to respond to the voice of the recluse.

A streak of gold appeared in the eastern sky. The sparrow-hawk screamed on the rocks, and the martens retired to the hollows of the elms. It was the signal for Atala's funeral. I placed her body on my shoulders; and the hermit walked before, with a spade in his hand. We began to descend from rock to rock; age and death alike retarded our steps. On seeing the dog who had found us in the desert, and who now, skipping about with joy, directed us through a different path, I burst into tears. Atala's flowing locks, fanned by the morning breeze, frequently spread a golden veil before my eyes; sometimes fatigued with my burthen, I was obliged to lay it down upon the moss, and seat myself beside it, to recover my strength. At length we arrived at the spot, and

descended beneath the arch of the bridge. O my son!—how interesting must have been the sight of a young savage and an old Christian hermit, on their knees opposite to one another, in the desert, scooping with their hands a grave for a poor girl, whose body lay stretched out close by, in the dry bed of a torrent.

When our task was completed, we placed the lovely corpse in its bed of clay. Alas! I had hoped to prepare for her a far different couch! Then, taking a little dust in my hand, I fixed my eyes in silence, for the last time, upon the countenance of Atala; and afterwards began to cover with mould this virgin, who had seen but eighteen summers. I saw the features of my sister gradually disappear, and her beauties intercepted by the curtain of eternity. Her bosom for a short time peered above the dark soil, just as a white lily lifts its head above the black earth. "Lopez," I then exclaimed, "behold thy son commit thy daughter to the dust!" and I finished covering Atala with the earth of slumber.

We returned to the grotto, and I imparted to the missionary my design of remaining with him. The saint, who was intimately acquainted with the heart of man, discovered my reason, and the stratagem of my grief. He said to me, "Chactas, son of Outalissi, as long as Atala existed, I

entreated you to abide in these deserts; but now your condition is changed; you owe yourself to your country. Believe me, my son, grief is not long-lived; it will sooner or later have an end, because the heart of man is finite; this is one of our greatest miseries: we are not even capable of being long unhappy. Return to the Meschacebé; go and console your mother, who laments your absence every day, and who needs your support. Instruct yourself in the religion of your beloved Atala, as soon as you find opportunity, and remember, that you have promised her to become virtuous, and to embrace Christianity. I myself will watch over the sepulchre of your sister.—.... Go forth, my son; God, the spirit of your sister, and the affections of your aged friend, shall follow you."

Such were the words of the recluse of the Rock: and his advice was too weighty, his wisdom too great, for me not to obey. On the following day I left my venerable host, who pressed me to his heart, bestowing on me his last counsels, blessings, and tears. I proceeded to the grave; and was surprised to find there a little cross rising over the dead, like the mast of a vessel which has been shipwrecked. I guessed that the hermit had been praying there during the night; and this mark of friendship and piety made my tears flow abundantly. I was tempted to re-open the grave, and to look once more on

my beloved! but a religious terror prevented me. I sat down on the ground, with one elbow resting on my knees, and my head on my hand. There I remained long buried in painful reverie. There it was, O René, that I made for the first time bitter reflections on the vanity of our lives, and the greater vanity of our projects. Who, my son, has not done so? I am now but an old stag blanched by winter: my years equal those of the crow; but though so many days have accumulated over my head, though I have had a long experience of life, I have never yet met with a being who was not deceived in his dreams of felicity, no heart that hath felt not some secret wound. The bosom most apparently serene is but like the natural wells in the savannah of Alachua; the surface seems calm and pure; but when you look into it, you see a large crocodile which it nourishes in its waters.

Having thus seen the sun rise and set over this place of grief, I prepared the next morning, at the first cry of the stork, to quit the sacred sepulchre. I left it as if it was to be the goal from which I was to start in the career of virtue. Thrice I invoked the soul of Atala: thrice did the Spirit of the desert reply to my cries beneath the funereal arch. I next saluted the east, and discovered afar off, on one of the mountain paths, the hermit, who was proceeding to the hut of some unfortunate being. Falling on my

knees, and closely embracing the grave, I cried, "Sleep in peace in this strange land, too unhappy girl! As the reward of thy love, thy exile, and thy death, thou art now to be abandoned, even by Chactas." Then shedding floods of tears, I tore myself from the daughter of Lopez, and from those solitary places where I left, at the foot of the monument of nature, a monument still more august—the humble tomb of Virtue.

THE END.

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